# THE MEANING OF CHRISTIANITY

WYCLIFFE COLLEGE LIBRARY
3 1761 02866 4530

FREDERICK A. M. SPENCER

LIBRARY

**Wycliffe College**

TORONTO

STACKS

Stacks

Shelf No. BR121 Sp3

Register No. 11370

19

IVV/25

WYCLIFFE COLLEGE
LIBRARY

33

# THE MEANING OF CHRISTIANITY

# THE MEANING OF CHRISTIANITY

BY

FREDERICK A. M. SPENCER, M.A.

*Brasenose College, Oxford.*

33-S
11370

T. FISHER UNWIN
LONDON: ADELPHI TERRACE
LEIPSIC: INSELSTRASSE 20
1912

45201174 ✓

(*All rights reserved.*)

# CONTENTS

PAGE
INTRODUCTION . . . . . . . . 7

CHAPTER I

THE SPIRITUAL . . . . . . . 23

CHAPTER II

GOD . . . . . . . . 51

CHAPTER III

CHRIST . . . . . . . . 96

CHAPTER IV

THE HOLY SPIRIT . . . . . . 155

CHAPTER V

SIN . . . . . . . . 171

CHAPTER VI

THE ATONEMENT . . . . . . 210

CHAPTER VII

THE DOCTRINE OF GRACE . . . . . 240

CHAPTER VIII

THE INSTITUTIONS OF CHRISTIANITY . . . . 265

CHAPTER IX

PAGE
THE END OF THE WORLD . . . . . . 307

CHAPTER X

THE RESURRECTION . . . . . . . 347

CHAPTER XI

THE JUDGMENT . . . . . . . 379

CHAPTER XII

THE KINGDOM OF GOD . . . . . . 402

# INTRODUCTION

## I. OBJECT.

RELIGION is activity of souls in which it is supposed that there is intercourse with supernatural power. A religion is a recognised kind of such activity. Now religion involves ideas concerning the nature of the power with which intercourse is supposed to be held and concerning the means of intercourse. And as the moral sense develops, there arise and grow ideas concerning right and wrong, together with reward and punishment from the being or beings which are the objects of religion. Accordingly, religion naturally carries with it some sort of thought concerning the controlling being or beings of the World and concerning the use to be made of human life, so as to avoid evil and obtain good.

Now there is a tendency in the human mind to try to extend the systems of thought connected with religion, without regard to the practical requirements of religion or of the conduct of life. For abundance and completeness of thought seem to be intrinsically good. But it may be that such theology prepares for progress in religion and the conduct of life, even as scientific inquiries which were pursued purely for the sake of the extension of knowledge proved subsequently of great practical utility. Certainly it seems likely that if the present life is to be followed by life after death, some knowledge of the latter order of life may assist towards good use of the former. And generally, as human beings become more and more capable of intelligently ordering their life, so, it is probable, do they become more able to obtain and to profit by knowledge of the relation of human souls to the power with which intercourse takes place through religion, if such there be.

We wish to know the truth of the subjects with which the main doctrines of Christianity deal: namely, the means of intercourse of human souls with God, the position of human souls in the Universe, the destiny of God for them in the future and conditions of fulfilling that destiny. For such knowledge will assuredly greatly assist towards good for humanity.

We choose to consider the doctrines of Christianity rather than of any other religion, because Christianity is more familiar to us, and because it is professedly the religion of those portions of humanity which, on the whole, appear most developed.

## II. METHOD.

How are we to find the desired truth? It is not possible in this quest to treat the Bible as infallible. Geology, biology, and literary criticism have dispelled the dream of the literal inerrancy of the Holy Scriptures of Christianity. The account in Genesis of the creation of the World and of man, however inspiring and religiously valuable, has been demonstrated by natural science to be not in accordance with the facts. The Pentateuch has been shown to be a composite work, in which later developments of the Israelitish religion have been referred to an early stage of it. Interpolations and additions, made long after the death of the men under whose names the books stand, have been brought to light in the records of Hebrew prophecy, and also predictions concerning the near future, which were not fulfilled. Grave disparities have appeared between the so-called Synoptic Gospels and the Fourth Gospel. And in the former there is recorded prophecy of a catastrophic end of the world within the then living generation, which did not take place. The writings of St. Paul and the Epistle to the Hebrews contain far-fetched interpretations of the Jewish Scriptures, and are here and there tinctured with a rabbinical mode of thought which is out of harmony with the highest Christian spirit. The Apocalypse of John the Divine is largely a product of pre-Christian imagination concerning the end of the world, with comparatively little of the peculiar ethical and religious ideas of the gospels.

But the Bible may appeal in respect of the religion which it expresses even to those to whom its science is crude. Wherefore distinction between the science and the religion of the Bible may help towards appreciation of its value. The Bible issued from a series of strong religious movements in people who were relatively unaffected by ideas derived from systematic study of Nature. Hence it has served to present religion and morality, after its views of the processes of the physical world had become superseded. Its astronomy is pre-Copernican, its biology is pre-Darwinian ; but through its representation of the nature of God and the ideal for man it has uplifted many who have been learned in Copernican and Darwinian science. The religious and moral value of the Bible is, to a high degree at least, independent of its errors as to material existence.

But how is it with the theology of the Bible, which stands, as it were, between the religion and the ideas about Nature? It evidently partakes somewhat of the erroneousness of the latter. The Hebrew conception of God in His creative activity, for instance, can hardly be maintained. Some of the biblical descriptions of the Divine judgment of souls are out of harmony with a more mature view of the processes of the Universe. The presentation of the principle of the redemption of man is coloured with ethical and religious ideas which do not seem in accord with the highest conception of God that is to be found elsewhere in the New Testament. Accordingly we must not take the theology of the Bible without alteration as the foundation of our theology. Rather should we discriminate that in it which arises out of religion and religious experience from that in it which is the product of the beliefs and ways of thought of the time, and develop the former by means of the best science and philosophy we can obtain.

But we cannot let the subject rest here. Religion, together with the ideal of life arising out of it, changes greatly in the course of the Bible. First, there is the national Deity of Israel, who instigates to the slaughter of other nations; then, the universal God of Righteousness, who judges impartially the peoples of the world and demands obedience to law; and, thirdly, the Loving Father in Heaven who calls all men individually to a salvation that is not of this world and requires that they should love one another. To some extent elements in the old religion are replaced by new elements, and to some extent they are retained, but subordinated to principles which limit their significance. It would seem that we must take the religion of the Bible, if at all, in its final form as basis of our theology. The Old Testament, however, has had value for generations subsequent to the rise of Christianity, partly as serving to educate to Christianity, partly as comprising elements of religion which were taken over by Christianity.

But the question presents itself, How may we assume that the religion of the Bible in its final form also will not be transcended? For many centuries the religion of the early Christians, though it greatly developed, was not in principle surpassed. Meanwhile the human race has progressed in other ways, notably in science. May it not be that after a time the main movement of progress will again be in religion, and original Christianity will be left far behind?

The reply to this is twofold. Even if the Christianity of the New Testament be destined to be surpassed, it is not therefore valueless as a basis for theology. So may the science of the present epoch be destined to be surpassed by the science of a future epoch, and yet convey much truth. The fact that the present religion is less than the future religion will render the theology built upon it not so much false as incomplete. Certainly in the early stages, both of religion and belief about the World, there was much which had to be later discarded as erroneous. But we ought not to assume that the religion and science which have followed contain error to any approaching extent. Secondly, it is conceivable that finality, even in principles, may already have been attained. It is hard to think of the fundamentals of natural science being discarded. Likewise in Christianity, the principles of absolute self-devotion in love to God, and of service in love to other souls as being of equal value with oneself, seem to be somehow final, though there may be immense extension of their application.

Another manner of indicating the value of the Bible is to consider it as a record of Jesus Christ who affords the principle of religion, and as containing some early appreciations of Jesus Christ in this regard. We might be prepared for error and imperfection in these appreciations, but they would indicate the sort of significance which Christ bears for humanity, and it would devolve upon us, so far as we can, to acquire a deeper and wider appreciation of Christ. In this view the standard or principle of religion would be found not so much in the Bible as in the personality which the Bible, with various degrees of truth, makes known to us. Of this also there is vast extension of application as mankind grows.

But it is not merely the religion and morality of the Bible which must be taken into account in our theology. We must pay special regard also to the changes declared to be produced in the soul by Divine agency in response to the religion. New birth and life in the Spirit of God, according to the New Testament, are given by God to human souls in response to faith and prayer and love. The experience of these, it may be argued, indicates that the religion which conditions them contains a substantially true view of God and the ideal for man, while these experiences themselves afford a yet deeper glimpse into the nature of the Divine. Since, however, they are but slightly intimated in the language of the New Testament, we should investigate records of like experiences conditioned by like religion and life, though it may be that change in Christianity has conditioned difference in the accompanying sense of communion with the Divine.

Our preliminary estimate, then, of the value of the Bible, or, rather, of the New Testament, for theology is that it is the outcome of a widespread religious quickening, together with the corresponding sense of intercourse with and life from a great supra-mundane Power, which religious quickening gave the idea of religion and the Divine to many subsequent generations of a large portion of mankind. In the development of mankind there has frequently been a time of religious quickening and then a relatively long period of religious practice in accordance with the ideas derived from the time of quickening, though not without some inspiration in itself, and then another religious quickening which has used ideas derived from the preceding. Wherefore in our search for truth in the records of early Christianity, we do not imply that therein religion reached its zenith, but rather are we prepared for a greater religious movement and inspiration of Divine life.

Let us next consider the kind of value the dogmas and theology of the early centuries of Christianity should have for us. They represent the endeavour of the early Christians to construct a theology by means of the current thought. Now, inasmuch as the natural science of the time was very immature, and the philosophy of the time symbolic and lacking in certain abstract conceptions compared with the science and philosophy that have since come into existence, we cannot adopt the results of patristic theology without criticism or modification. But they may serve to indicate that certain lines of thought seemed to the most religious and thoughtful men of the age to be necessitated by and others to be incompatible with the essentials of Christianity, and so suggest similar relations between certain theories and Christianity to the thinkers of this age. We must endeavour to understand why the community of Christians made this theory a dogma and that a heresy, and to see how far analogous theories might be justly approved or rejected for the same or analogous reasons. The creeds, then, should not limit theological speculation, but indicate problems with which we have to deal. It is conceivable that both the opinion judged true and the opinion judged false by the Church councils were the outcome of perceptions, however dim, of truth. We should, then, try to understand why one element of truth was preferred to the other (as being probably more essential to be believed for the sake of religion) and to endeavour to synthesise the twain.

We must also take into consideration the subsequent development of Christianity. The religious principle derived from the Bible, through interaction with human life, grew for itself what one might call a body—ritual, morality, theology, with numerous institutions for promoting the practice of these. But as new human life came into contact with this body of religion, it began to modify it, and even to destroy it ; whereupon new embodiments of Christianity began to come into existence—new ritual, new morality, new theology.

In searching for the significance of Christianity in our theory of the Universe, we must look to what Christianity is growing to be. But this very search, this theology of ours, is a factor in the development of Christianity, and so is itself part of the object with which it is concerned.

But how can we be assured that religion and the sense of contact with supernatural power are not delusions? How may we know that there is a God to love, and that the feeling of being loved and quickened by God is not merely subjective? We must consider the reality which is known to us with a view to judging whether it implies such a reality as religion, and, in particular, Christianity postulates—whether, in fact, we can validly argue from the World to any such Being as may be represented or symbolised by the idea of God. To that end we shall survey the various main kinds of existence known and their manner of genesis and growth. And if it be found that the World is at all dependent on some reality of goodness and wisdom, we may reasonably suppose that the main course of religion affords more knowledge of that reality, since the goodness and wisdom would work for the enlightenment of mankind.

## III. THE POSSIBILITY OF THEOLOGY.

But is it possible to make valid inferences to such realities as those with which theology is largely concerned? For is not human thought properly limited, as Immanuel Kant taught, to objects of possible experience, among which God and life after death cannot be counted? Or may it not be that all *a priori* arguments are insecure? In face of such conceivable objections a statement of the rationale of philosophical thought is desirable.

The possibility of all inference rests upon the fact that existences have relations to other existences. If sufficient abstraction be made, it may be held that these relations will be necessary and so invariable. On the contrary, if existences were absolutely disconnected, certainty would be possible only about immediate experiences. Now inference presupposes either knowledge of a relation or connection, or else knowledge or supposition that a relation or connection exists. In prediction, for instance, of the action of substances according to chemical laws and in reliance on the working of gravitation, we may be unaware of what the connection is, but suppose that there must exist some connection, so that like effects to those experienced in the past are to be expected.

Ordinary scientific induction does not reveal what the connection is, but only that there is a connection which involves effects of a certain character. We seem, however, to have this much knowledge of connection in general—namely, that no existence comes into being of its own accord, and that a particular kind of existence in coming into being involves a particular kind of connection to other existence—the so-called law of causation and the law of uniformity of Nature. In any case, the experienced uniformity of natural forces renders, according to the laws of chance, the supposition of absolute independence of existences highly improbable.

In our own consciousness we seem to be capable of a more or less clear perception of what the connections upon which inference is based really are. For instance, we seem not only to suppose that there must be some connection between pain and the avoidance of the source of the pain, but also to understand what that connection is ; and in virtue of this understanding we hold ourselves capable of predicting that painful objects will, as a general rule, be avoided.

It is not here contended that, whenever on perception of such relation or connection we infer some existence not experienced, the inference is always quite certain. For it may be that our perception of the connection is not clear, or we may overlook the possibility of influences which would prevent the normal result. But in so far as we do perceive the connections in which various existences, just because they are what they are, stand to one another, so far can we safely infer to what lies outside our experience. And if we are aware that there are such connections, even though we do not know what they are, then we may with some probability argue and draw conclusions. We do not always, or even usually, arrive at general propositions by an elaborate induction, but rather postulate these propositions and then test them by experience. But the only ground for accepting them as true when they do fulfil the test applied is that this indicates a more or less necessary relation, on account of which a like result is commonly to be depended on.

The knowledge of necessary interconnection of existences being, then, the ground of inference, can we make inferences with certainty, or any degree of probability, about those existences which constitute the subject-matter of theology? It will be convenient to examine the manner in which Kant limited the sphere of legitimate inference, with the view to answering the question whether and to what extent theology is possible.

Kant, in his "Critique of Pure Reason," claimed to state the true *via media* between speculative philosophy on the one hand, with its supposed conclusions about realities beyond human ken, and radical empiricism on the other hand, which involved complete scepticism about all except actual experience. The human mind, he maintained, can validly reason about matters of possible human experience. This he held to be due to the fact that the mind imposes certain forms on the matter of experience ; whence it can know that it will always discover these forms in experience. We can be sure of certain propositions about any possible experience—for example, geometrical and causal relations—simply because these relations are imposed by our own minds.

But this theory of knowledge is untenable, though it may point to truth. For, in the first place, knowledge of the *a priori* faculties of the mind whereby it forms and orders experience must be attained by inference, as they are not part of the content of experience. For, surely, it would come as a surprise to most people to be told that space and time and the regularity of causation are due to powers of their own mind. These faculties are not, generally at least, either things of experience or of possible experience. But if so, how can we be certain that they operate with strict uniformity, so that the laws of space and time and causation will always hold good of our experience? How, indeed, on Kantian principles could we know at all about these faculties?

Again, the implication in Kant's doctrine of causality seems to be that the causal nexus and uniformity in the abstract are imposed by the mind, whereas the particular content of causal connections is given by things-in-themselves. Perhaps there is a little fluctuation as regards this, the things-in-themselves being occasionally conceived as giving mere sensation in general, or even just the impulse to mental construction. But the former description of their function seems more in accord with Kant's general theory. For instance, in discovering the properties of a hitherto unknown chemical substance, it is to be supposed that the mind determines that the chemical shall act and react regularly, but the particular manner of its action and reaction is due to the thing-in-itself. This general causal regularity is all that the mind can be certain of *a priori*, and presumably, therefore, all that springs from the mind. It would seem, on Kant's theory, that an event might be causally connected with almost any other event as far as the mind is concerned, but that if once things-in-themselves have so acted on a human mind that the mind causally connects two events, things-in-themselves are under the necessity of continuing to act in this definite way on all human minds. But this would imply that the human mind controls things-in-themselves in a way far beyond the influence of ordinary human volition ; as if, indeed, things-in-themselves had a choice of many modes of combining events, but having chosen one were obliged to keep to it —an incredible idea, and one quite contrary to the spirit of the Kantian philosophy. Or else, indeed, things-in-themselves act regularly of themselves, in which case the uniformity of causation belongs to them, and is rather recognised than made by the mind.

Thirdly, Kant's principle that knowledge can only be of matters of possible experience, if taken strictly, involves hypothetical solipsism. Since we cannot, under ordinary human conditions at least, experience the consciousness of other men, we cannot, on the Kantian principle, know about them. Or, to put it differently, the sensations which suggest to us other minds and their ideas are equally with the sensations of material objects not the work of our minds, but affections of our sensibility caused from without. But the objects of knowledge in both cases are the result of synthesis by means of mental relations which do not, so far as we know, correspond to anything in the source or sources of the sensations. Why, then, on Kant's theory, should we believe that our ideas of other minds have independent existences corresponding to them, if there are not independent existences corresponding to our ideas of inanimate things? On the other hand, if we can so far overstep the bounds of our experience as to be certain of both the existence and some of the thoughts and feelings of other minds, on what ground are we to be debarred from reasoning about other objects which we cannot experience?

Kant was prompted to his theory of knowledge by distrust of the facile and mutually conflicting cosmologies of speculative philosophy. But in avoidance of this he did not wish to be pushed into radical empiricism, Hume's doctrine practically, that we can know only what we experience. Between his Scylla and his Charybdis, the claim to know all and the claim to know only what one is immediately conscious of, he traced a middle way—the claim to know only things of possible experience. But we should ask, "In what sense possible?" Except through clairvoyance, it is not possible for human beings to see the other side of the Moon. It is not possible for people in Europe to see what will take place in an hour's time in China. It is not possible to see an event which happened yesterday. Yet all these are matters of possible experience in Kant's sense.

It seems that there are two conditions for our knowing and reasoning about existence which we do not experience. This existence must be of like nature to existence of which we have experience. And it must be connected with existence of which we have experience through existence of like nature to existence of which we have experience. Two observations are called for. First, memory enables us in a manner to revive experience, so that inferences may be drawn by means of past experience. Secondly, material processes we know as forms of causation in general, causation being experienced in our own psychical processes; certain laws to which substances conform are deduced from the conceptions of space and time and are verified by facts; and different kinds of substances are distinguished by differences in their sensible effects, and are found, so far as we can test them, to be fairly constant in their mutual relations.

Is, then, valid theology possible? Let us first remark that there is a tendency in man to speculative philosophy and theology, which gives, *prima facie*, a presumption in favour of the possibility of valid theology. No doubt much of the reasoning of theologians has been inconclusive, and has even led to false results. But that shows that theology is difficult, not that it is impossible. Well, then, are there the conditions of valid reasoning about non-experienced existence in the subject-matter of theology?

Let us take two instances—God, and life after death. We may know, or at least think, with some measure of correctness about God on these conditions: that to the principles of His nature there are analogues in our own personalities—if, for instance, God is essentially of a goodness and wisdom, however superior, yet not wholly unlike the goodness and wisdom of man at his best; and that in our perception of the material world or in our inner consciousness we experience effects of the nature of God so far as we conceive it. We may know or have right opinion about life after death: first, if and in so far as it is life in some way resembling this present life; and secondly, if we find in ourselves that which involves survival of death and subsequent awakening; and we may add that our ideas about it may be augmented by experiences which cannot easily be attributed to any other source than the conscious activity of those who have died.

# The Meaning of Christianity

## CHAPTER I

## THE SPIRITUAL

IN the conscious life of man there are elements which he has in common with the lower animals, and there is also that which no animal has, or not to the same degree. The conscious life of animals may well be described as a succession of independent conative processes, of which some more, some less, reach their natural conclusion of satisfaction—in other words, a succession of independent impulses, appetites, wants, which in various degrees are fulfilled. They are independent as regards the consciousness of the animal, however closely interconnected they may be in his whole vital economy. The various processes of hunger and eating, thirst and drinking, fatigue and sleeping, through which he passes in his life, each have their function in the maintenance and increase of life and health. But the animal does not know this ; he eats because of the feeling of hunger, drinks because of the feeling of thirst, rests because of the feeling of fatigue, not because he knows that the tissues of his body need replenishing.

But the conscious life of man differs from that of animals in that he co-ordinates his actions in view of some purpose or in accordance with some principle. He remembers what he has done and the consequences, and uses his memory to help him to more certain and fuller satisfaction of his desires. He considers the causes of success and failure in the past, and adapts his actions accordingly. He calculates, schemes, contrives. He is no longer bound to present perception, but, starting with his own experiences, figures in his consciousness the distant and the future, the certain, the probable, the feasible, and the merely imaginary. Moreover, he acquires knowledge of the experiences of his fellows through visible and audible signs of ideas, and then thinks about the thoughts and feelings and desires of other men, and the objects that they have experienced or might experience. And he is no longer confined to his immediate feelings for his desires, but with suggestions given by these creates objects of desire in his imagination, extended, glorified pleasures and triumphs ; and, furthermore, he adopts the objects of desire or of conceivable desire, and the satisfactions of others as ends of action for himself ; and then he proceeds to plan and perform an interconnected series of acts which shall bring these objects within his reach or the reach of another.

None of the lower animals are like this, or only to a hardly noticeable degree. They behave according to present bodily impulse and in view of objects of present perception. Not but what they may have a kind of memory and imagination. They may even be said to think and contrive. But they are dependent on present perception and the fluctuating content of images due to past perception. They cannot use and control the ideas suggested by the past in the service of thought and purpose about a present, still less a future situation. Nor can they use their imagination to plan new and greater objects of desire. Nor do they purposely use signs for communication of ideas. To take the first point—no animal, so far as we know, waits to think how to do a thing or deal with a difficulty. He rushes straight at his object, and acquires habits of successful movement through experience of satisfaction and dissatisfaction in the results of various attempts. In more technical language, the conscious life of the lower animals is perceptual, they have no free use of ideas. Man, however, has conceptual consciousness (as well as perceptual), and calls up and uses ideas in his imagination for the attainment of objects which he imagines.[1]

There is a further point of difference. For the lower animals the good things consist almost solely in the satisfaction of a few physical appetites and certain forms of affectionate care and caress, the most notable of the latter being those of a mother with her offspring. Man, however, acquires new kinds of pleasurable activity, and new objects of desire and effort. Sight and hearing, for instance, give him enjoyment of beauty. And the power of thought, by means of which he plans ways of satisfying his animal desires, in itself yields new objects of endeavour and valued experiences. For he wishes to know and delights in learning about the nature of things. And then, whereas in animals there is only a very rudimentary capacity for affection, in man there is conscious love of persons. He is aware of the intellectual and moral character of another, and wishes to enter into close intellectual and moral relation with that other and to remain so united.

---

[1] I owe this psychology of animals largely to a course of lectures given by Prof. Stout, as Wilde Reader in Psychology, in Oxford.

The root of the difference between the animal and the human consciousness is not that an animal has merely sensations, impulses, and feelings, whereas a man has reason, will, and emotions. For the higher animals at least manifest some measure of cognition and intention and feeling about others. It is rather that the animal's consciousness is limited to present perception together with ideas derived from past experience evoked through association. Man, however, has the faculty of evoking at will ideas derived from past experience, and of producing variations of these. Hence he has far more abundant material upon which to exercise his reason and volition and emotion. He is thus able to trace out the laws governing the relations of elements of his experience, and so to construct intricate and complex systems of knowledge. He is also enabled by this faculty to make for himself objects of desire, and through tracing out the conditions of their realisation to engage in sets of co-ordinated actions that extend far beyond the present perception. And through the same use of ideas, being guided by signs in speech and behaviour and appearance, he frames conceptions of the characters and intentions of other persons, and in virtue of these conceptions has appropriate emotions and mental attitudes towards them.

Reason, volition, emotion—these constitute the threefold activity of the ego. Reason (or cognition) is the faculty of knowing and understanding reality ; volition is the faculty of using this knowledge for the production of good ; emotion is the attitude of soul towards a reality, and includes cognition and volition. Now it appears that reason and volition and emotion exist in an inchoate form in animals, inasmuch as animals perceive and desire and feel. But they have much wider scope in human beings, owing to the faculty of evoking ideas of past experiences and of varying these.

Now the unhindered pursuit, with imagination and intelligence, of the satisfactions of the animal nature produces painful and disastrous consequences. And so certain practices, though immediately attended with pleasure and satisfaction to the agent, are viewed with horror, as involving evil to the agent or to the society to which the agent belongs. And the omission of certain natural acts and conduct is likewise condemned as productive of evil. Therewith it comes to be felt that man has a deeper and more permanent life which suffers harm from certain actions and courses of conduct and omissions that far outweighs the superficial good to be gained from them. Thus morality arises, being the conscious obligation to certain voluntary limitations and desirable actions in the life of man. But the main content of the activity is left optional.

We have next to inquire what religion is and what place it holds in human life. To that end we have to consider the environment in which man finds himself and the temporal limits of his life. He lives in a world in which there are great and powerful things and forces, on some of which his existence and welfare depend, and some of which may ruin or destroy him. Moreover, in his savage state he is liable to danger from wild beasts and falls victim to mysterious agencies of destruction—poison, plague, sickness. Now, since at this stage the notion of mechanical force is too abstract, whereas he derives the notion of conscious life from himself, he conceives these powers to be living, conscious beings. Hence, since his life and prosperity depend on them, he desires to come to terms with them and gain their favour, which he attempts to do by propitiating them with gifts and carrying out what he imagines to be their wishes. In this we find what we may regard as the germinal principle of religion—namely, the tendency to conform oneself to the living power in Nature. Religion, then, appears as the necessary outcome of man's conceptual consciousness, together with the fact that he is surrounded by powers affecting his life and welfare, and to which he attributes mind and will.

But there is another consideration. The small and temporary affairs of his life man has more or less in his own power to manage according to his wishes. But death or disaster may come suddenly upon him when he is not looking for them, and before very long he must die in any case. Moreover, all that depends upon his agency is the application of forces and the use of material that lie to his hand. He does not control the sunshine or the rain; he does not understand how corn grows; nor does he make the animal which he hunts for food. To the great and mysterious powers of the World he owes the fundamental conditions of life, and from them come often prosperity or death, and his ultimate destiny is in their hands.

It is, then, mainly in respect of the relatively great things of his life that man is religious. He desires to make his peace with, to come to terms with agencies that may affect him for good or ill, especially in respect of important and dominant interests. Hence religion is characterised by seriousness. The fundamental religious emotion is reverence. Only, this reverence has various forms—fear that is shrinking terror, fear that inspires obedience, silent awe, humility and resignation, penitent self-abasement, affectionate trust, passionate self-devotion, love uplifted to the God who is love. But all these religious emotions are kinds of reverence, in the sense that they are feelings for what is great and is capable of great influence on the life. Thus religion arises out of the capacity of man for the suitable attitude and behaviour towards the powers of the World which vitally affect him. As attitude and emotion it is some kind of reverence ; as behaviour and will it is the effort to conform in some way to the supreme power or powers, be it outward conformity of action or some degree of personal union.

Now it was shown above that man, as distinguished from the lower animals, has a life in which the parts are to some extent arranged and determined by dominant principles of cognition and volition. His momentary thoughts and actions are what they are on account of certain beliefs and purposes. In human life there is subordination of idea to idea and of aim to aim. There arise complex unities of knowledge and will which interact with passing experience. And since human existence is deeply affected by powers of the World, man tends to order his life in accordance with these powers as they affect him, so that his attitudes of mind and will towards them to some degree rule his life. But his attitude towards the powers of the World, so far as he conceives of them as intelligent and purposive, is religion. We may conclude that religion has its place in life as a principle which controls and affects thought and action. And the more the living power of the World is supposed to influence or to be capable of influencing man's life, the more will religion tend to dominate and colour and set in order the varied content of human consciousness. More precisely, man regulates his life in accordance with what he supposes to be the will of God and prays for favour from God, in order to get the most value in his life.

We may now see how morality gains religious sanction. For the God or Gods are naturally thought of as good and therefore as supporters of the laws of right and wrong. Moreover, the evil consequences of transgression of the laws, in the absence of science of Nature, are attributed to the Gods. We should remark further that the social aspect of religion and of morality brings the two into connection; offences against the tribe are offences against the deity to whom the tribe belongs.

Now human beings form societies of which the members interact with one another through physical media which affect the senses. Speech and look, protection and attack, the provision of food and raiment and shelter—all are ways of interaction between human individuals through changing parts of the matter with which the consciousness of each is in connection. Morality, in the main, is the system of rules regulating this interaction. And religion, according to this condition of life, implies that a supernatural being (or beings) is within such a society of individuals interacting through physical media.

The deity (or deities) is supposed to interact with mankind in the following manner: he provides the general conditions and materials of human life, and also modifies these to suit special cases, and uses certain natural forces to favour and to punish, and, furthermore, enters into fellowship with his worshippers through sacrifice. He created the Earth and Sea and Sky, he makes the Sun to run its course, he sends clouds with rain, he causes the fruits of the Earth to grow and animals to breed, wherefrom man obtains the necessaries and comforts of his existence. He will bless his worshippers by producing exceptional fertility; he will punish those who offend him with drought or storm or pestilence, while he may smite down the individual sinner with sickness or misfortune or the weapon of an enemy. Through sacrifice his worshippers propitiate him, and in the sacrificial meal of the animal sacred to him they draw of his life.

But in certain respects, according to pre-Christian religion, this material life and material inter-communication between the deity and men is transcended. Death is supposed to be followed by a relatively unsubstantial existence apart from the body, whether closer to or farther from the deity. Visions are supposed to occur to certain favoured men, although there is no marked line of distinction between these and corporeal appearances of Divine beings. Inspiration from the deity is believed in, this taking the form of voices inaudible to any but the prophet. We may remark that these two latter religious phenomena might be regarded as forms of telepathy, which does not proceed through the ordinary material media of intercourse. In another respect the materialism of primitive religion becomes modified: more importance is attributed to the will and disposition as distinct from the outward acts in moral estimates, as being the Divine manner of judging.

We will next try to gain some notion of the ideal to which human nature, as thus constituted, tends. What would be the completion of this cognition and volition and emotion, and what would be the religion corresponding to it? A rational will tends to the perfect co-ordination of all the various aims of life with a view to production of the greatest amount of good. But, since material conditions change, there would be constant change in this system of purposes, although the main direction would, presumably, be the same. But of what would this good consist? At the animal level good is the satisfaction of elementary appetites and cravings. Would, then, the all-inclusive good be the condition of life involving the greatest amount of these satisfactions—a condition, as it were, of secure health and ample provision for bodily needs and wide scope for various activity?

But, as observed, with the growth of the mind, there come into existence other forms of consciousness which give satisfaction. There are æsthetic pleasures derivable from senses which served primarily to give direction in the satisfaction of the appetites, and they are enhanced by associated ideas that they suggest. And reason itself yields delight in the acquisition and co-ordination of knowledge, and the will in the working out of purposes and in the triumph of the moral over the immoral. Likewise the emotions in various relations of human beings to one another, and, particularly, the supreme emotion of love, are felt to be intrinsically good. Thus the reflective and inward activity which belongs to the conceptual consciousness is held to be a phase of life better and higher than the life of mere perception and the pursuit and gratification of appetites. Accordingly, the rational will would organize life for the development and exercise of reason and will and emotion with æsthetic perception.

And because human life is social, and because the rational will is subjective, and so, as operative in a certain individual, not for that reason preferring the good of that individual to the good of another, therefore the rational will in each one will so organize the life of that one that thereby in conjunction with the lives of all others who are connected, so far as they are connected, the best life for all may be produced. And this life of human beings in community with one another will be predominantly a life of love, since in love each harmonises his personality with each in joy.

But all this life will be ordered with regard to the sort of existence (if any) to be expected after death. Those elements in human life will be especially developed which seem likely to survive for the soul when it has lost its body. But it will also have to be considered how far the departed souls are influenced by the subsequent condition of the human race in the flesh.

How will all this affect morality and religion? Morality we regarded as consisting of prohibitions and obligations which leave for the main content of the life the natural pursuit of objects of satisfaction by the help of conceptual thinking. Morality in this sense limits and in certain respects positively determines a life for the most part non-moral. But as the rational will develops, the whole of life becomes organized with a view to the realisation of the greatest good of the society to which the individual in whom that will is operative belongs. Nothing is strictly indifferent, though, indeed, it may subserve the greatest good that portions of the life be left to caprice for the sake of relaxation. Obligation, which is the rational relation between will and an unrealised but realisable good, will permeate and determine the whole of the person's activity. Morality thus becomes transcended by the will devoted to the good and comprehending the whole life.

What, then, would be the religion in accord with all this? God would be conceived as the Being of wisdom and goodwill and love who orders the material world for the benefit of His creatures. His nature might be supposed to be discerned in the world. But science has tended to discountenance belief in special adaptations and interventions by the Divine in the material order. The axiom of the uniformity of causation would not indeed necessarily exclude such, since the will of God to help in particular ways men in particular circumstances would constitute variation in antecedents apparently similar. But the main tendency of scientific investigation has been towards belief in unvarying uniformity of physical causation. Yet this uniformity might be compatible with the existence of another kind of communication of man with God—namely, of the same order as telepathy between man and man. Thus man might pray to God, and God might inspire man with truth and goodness.

Such an ideal for humanity has been entertained by thinkers of the age when the supernatural in Christianity had been to some degree discredited by natural science, while its ethic accorded with their aspiration after a better life of mankind. Such looked for an improvement of the nature of man as they saw it constituted and laboured to that end. Meanwhile, the religious and theological elements of Christianity became vague in their consciousness. Their notion of God was abstract and attenuated, or, indeed, they reduced Him to a great Unknown or Unknowable, the ground of all existence. Life after death was regarded as impersonal, or even doubted.

But there are apparent indications of a form of consciousness in store for human souls which transcends the conceptual consciousness of man, much as that transcends the merely perceptual consciousness of animals.

In the first place, we should observe that the conceptual consciousness involves certain limitations to the growing life.

Reason is handicapped by the small area of consciousness, only a very few ideas being cognised in their mutual relations together. Hence the difficulty in the discovery of new principles. A principle involves a relation between two ideas, and, unless the one suggests the other, they will very rarely come into the small focus of consciousness together. We may also observe that sensation gives little of the real being of things : the nature of the forces of matter remains a mystery. Human beings, indeed, know more of each other, since the experience of one enables him to form some idea of the experience of another, as indicated by his sensations.

Volition suffers from a corresponding limitation. Here we find the explanation of incontinence—that is, failure to act in accordance with moral principles. The focus of consciousness becomes occupied by strong desires, which overcome the contrary tendency of a weak apprehension or merely implicit awareness of a superior good. But, indeed, the supreme good cannot be really apprehended, but only symbolically known about, and therefore not adequately willed, in this form of consciousness.

Emotion exhibits a like imperfection in the fact that the mind may be more deeply affected by the less than by the more important event or circumstance. But most of all in the supreme emotion—namely, love—does the conceptual form of consciousness restrict the life of the soul. Love is the activity of soul towards and in communion and union with another. But at the stage of human life under consideration souls do not come into direct relation with each other. Rather does one fashion to itself a system of images of what it supposes another to be from the evidence of its senses, and interacts with those images directly, but with the actual other soul indirectly. And even these images are only intermittently and to a small extent at one time realised in consciousness. But love hungers for immediate and lasting and abundant communion and union with the loved one. And this strong desire of the soul in respect of its most essential and noblest quality, fretting against the barriers inherent in this form of consciousness, is surely an earnest that another form of consciousness awaits the soul in which these barriers will not exist. Soul will know and act on and love soul immediately and wholly and eternally.

Such, at any rate, is the aspiration of human life at its profoundest.

Secondly, the more inward religions look for a higher life impending for souls who live in accordance with the demands of the religion. Hinduism, Buddhism, Neoplatonism, Sufism, Christianity—all claim to offer to the soul a way of escape from the limitations inherent in human life and of union with the Infinite. Only, in Oriental religion there is a tendency to represent both the way and the goal in negative fashion. Buddhism, in particular, demands the renunciation of desire and promises a repose in which all individuality is lost. The main tradition of Christianity, on the contrary, calls for a life of active benevolence and promises a heaven of vitality and joy.

St. Paul speaks of a higher life attained through faith, in which the Spirit of God dwells in the soul. He calls this life spiritual in contrast to the ordinary life of man which is natural (ψυχικός). In the Johannine writings (the Gospel and the Epistles) Christ is said to bring to man "eternal life," or "the life," or simply "life." Entrance into this life constitutes a new birth. God and Christ are said to dwell in human souls who have this life, and these souls to dwell in God and Christ. According to both St. Paul and St. John the new life is enjoyed by Christians in their present mortal condition, though it is destined to increase with wonderful bliss and glory hereafter. To all this we should add the testimony of the Acts of the Apostles to an experience which was thought to be inspiration by the Holy Spirit, which commonly came to the earliest Christians upon their conversion, and sometimes on other occasions.

And then, thirdly, seeming indications of a new and superior kind of consciousness impending for human souls are to be gathered from various forms of experience, besides the religious, when at a high level. Æsthetic contemplation, especially of the majestic, and where there is suggestion of remote, unknown depths and distances, is apt to give a feeling as if of a wonderful and transcendent reality, of which one is but faintly aware. The soul seems to stand on the threshold of being vast and grand and unimagined in earthly consciousness, to know which would be to pass beyond the limitations and pettinesses incidental to the present existence. The visible and audible beauty and grandeur are, as it were, symbols of immaterial beauty and grandeur, of which they thus make one vaguely aware.

A like sense occasionally accompanies intellectual effort, especially of the philosophic order. It may be present at the commencement of a period of metaphysical inquiry and fade away as technical and special difficulties arise for consideration. Some philosophies more than others afford this mystical feeling.

Also in the practical sphere the sense of the transcendent life is felt. When a man devotes himself in love and self-sacrifice to the uplifting of his fellow human beings, more especially when he casts aside the conventions which hampered him from this mode of life and defies the scorn and hatred of those who uphold these conventions, there comes to him a blissful feeling of entrance into a serene and vast and lovely life, though in the earliest stage the feeling does not continue with its original intensity, but dies down and revives from time to time. Religion tends to increase and slightly to modify this mystical feeling attached to the union of altruistic work and self-sacrifice and love.

Let us now notice a few personal records of the more vivid experiences of an apparent enlargement of consciousness. The following are taken from William James's "The Varieties of Religious Experience":—

1. "I know," writes Mr. Trine, "an officer on our police-force who has told me that many times when off duty and on his way home in the evening there comes to him such a vivid and vital realisation of his oneness with this Infinite Power, and this Spirit of Infinite Peace so takes hold of and so fills him, that it seems as if his feet could hardly keep to the pavement, so buoyant and so exhilarated does he become by reason of this inflowing tide."[1]

2. "I was alone upon the seashore as all these thoughts flowed over me, liberating and reconciling; and now again, as once before in distant days in the Alps of Dauphiné, I was impelled to kneel down, this time before the illimitable ocean, symbol of the Infinite. I felt that I prayed as I had never prayed before, and knew now what prayer really is: to return from the solitude of individuation into the consciousness of unity with all that is, to kneel down as one that passes away, and to rise up as one imperishable. Earth, heaven, and sea resounded as in one vast, world-encircling harmony. It was as if the chorus of all the great who had ever lived were about me. I felt myself one with them, and it appeared as if I heard their greeting: 'Thou, too, belongest to the company of those who overcome.'"[2]

---

[1] "In Tune with the Infinite," p. 137.

[2] Malwida von Meysenburg.

3. "I had spent the evening in a great city, with two friends, reading and discussing poetry and philosophy. We parted at midnight. I had a long drive in a hansom to my lodging. My mind, deeply under the influence of the ideas, images, and emotions called up by the reading and talk, was calm and peaceful. I was in a state of quiet, almost passive enjoyment, not actually thinking, but letting ideas, images, and emotions flow of themselves, as it were, through my mind. All at once, without warning of any kind, I found myself wrapped in a flame-coloured cloud. For an instant I thought of fire, an immense conflagration somewhere close by in that great city; the next, I knew the fire was within myself. Directly afterward there came upon me a sense of exultation, of immense joyousness, accompanied or immediately followed by an intellectual illumination impossible to describe. Among other things, I did not merely come to believe, but I saw that the Universe is not composed of dead matter, but is, on the contrary, a living Presence; I became conscious in myself of eternal life. It was not a conviction that I would have eternal life, but a consciousness that I possessed eternal life then; I saw that all men are immortal; that the cosmic order is such that without any peradventure all things work together for the good of each and all; that the foundation principle of the world, of all the worlds, is what we call love, and that the happiness of each and all is, in the long run, absolutely certain. The vision lasted a few seconds and was gone; but the memory of it and the sense of the reality of what it taught has remained during the quarter of a century which has since elapsed. I knew that what the vision showed

was true. I had attained to a point of view from which I saw that it must be true. That view, that conviction, I may say that consciousness, has never, even during periods of the deepest depression, been lost."[1]

4. "Without any expectation of it, without ever having the thought in my mind that there was any such thing for me, without any recollection that I had ever heard the thing mentioned by any person in the world, the Holy Spirit descended upon me in a manner that seemed to go through me—body and soul. I could feel the impression, like a wave of electricity, going through and through me. Indeed, it seemed to come in waves and waves of liquid love; for I could not express it in any other way. It seemed like the very breath of God. I can recollect distinctly that it seemed to fan me, like immense wings.

"No words can express the wonderful love that was shed abroad in my heart. I wept aloud with joy and love; and I do not know, but I should say I literally bellowed out the unutterable gushings of my heart. These waves came over me, and over me, and over me, one after the other, until I recollect I cried out, 'I shall die if these waves continue to pass over me.' I said, 'Lord, I cannot bear any more'; yet I had no fear of death."[2]

We may conclude with an extract from Dr. Bucke's "Cosmic Consciousness" (p. 2), quoted by William James:—

"The prime characteristic of cosmic consciousness is a consciousness of the Cosmos—that is, of the life and order of the Universe. Along with the consciousness of the Cosmos there occurs an intellectual enlightenment, which alone would place the individual on a new plane of existence—would make him almost a member of a new species. To this is added a state of moral exaltation, an indescribable feeling of elevation, elation, and joyousness, and a quickening of the moral sense, which is fully as striking, and more important than is the enhanced intellectual power. With these come what may be called a sense of immortality, a consciousness of eternal life, not a conviction that he shall have this, but the consciousness that he has it already."

---

[1] Dr. R. M. Bucke, "Cosmic Consciousness," pp. 7, 8.

[2] President Finney.

We will now consider the conclusions which, with greater or less degrees of certainty, are to be drawn from such evidence.

There is a higher kind of conscious life that human souls will attain, which surpasses the ordinary human conceptual consciousness in like manner as this surpasses the perpetual consciousness. This new consciousness we may call "the spiritual." Thus the various main kinds of consciousness are the perceptual, the conceptual, the spiritual. Perhaps as synonyms we may suggest the animal, the human, the Divine. As variant to "conceptual," the term "mental" may be suitable to ordinary use.

The spiritual at first manifests itself intermittently, in various sudden and brief states of mystical exaltation and trances; but we may expect it to become more continuous.

The nature of the spiritual is a consciousness more extended and with more intimate relation to objects than the conceptual or mental. The spiritual does not differ from the latter so much in virtue of difference in the principles of active life—in both there are thought, volition, emotion—as in virtue of these same principles having the means to realise themselves fully in the spiritual. In the perceptual consciousness of the animal thought and volition and emotion operate within very narrow limits ; in conceptual consciousness they have considerably wider scope, but yet can hardly become what they tend in accordance with their essence to be ; in the spiritual they are truly reason and goodness and love. We may gain some notion of the spiritual by means of a consideration of what conceptual consciousness is at its highest—the ideals that there manifest themselves and the changes in the faculties of consciousness that are needed for the realisation of those ideals. But religious experience also suggests that the spiritual will include intimate communion with a spiritual life that is not embodied in any physical organism such as the human and which corresponds to the idea of God. Accordingly, the supreme form of the spiritual, so far as we can conceive it, is abundant and continuous love, in which human souls and the life called " God " are in intimate communion.

The conditions for attaining to the spiritual seem to be a relatively high and pure development of the mental nature together with religious self-surrender to God. As the mental supervened upon the perceptual when the perceptual arrived at a certain degree of development, so, it is reasonable to think, does the spiritual supervene upon the mental when the mental has arrived at a certain degree of development. Yet this birth of the spiritual seems to arise through contact with invisible Divine life, which contact is, commonly at least, brought about through religion. The soul, to become spiritual, must apparently both be of a mental condition fit for the spiritual and also adopt some kind of attitude whereby it can be quickened into spiritual life by the Divine ; and, we may add, through constantly having this attitude it will be aided to grow in the spiritual.

It seems that various religions suffice for some attainment of the spiritual, the quality of the religion rather than the specific religious belief being the determining element. We should judge that a religion is effective to this end in so far as it promotes the growth of reason and goodness and love and evokes self-devotion to God conceived as embodying in the highest degree these qualities. Oriental religion is inferior to Christianity, as presenting a too negative ideal and too passive a self-surrender to the Divine. We need not deny that some spiritual life is thereby attained, but it is, we should opine, less vital and less conducive to that development of humanity which will be a condition of full spiritual life in the end.

We must distinguish the precise conditions requisite for the commencement of the spiritual life from those which are requisite for and produced by its subsequent development. Christian experience seems to show that a high realised standard of good life is not necessary for the birth in the soul of the spiritual. A core of goodness, in the form of longing for a good life, which, owing to the strength of habit and desire, fails to work itself out, may, so to speak, constitute a tract of the soul capable of receiving the Divine seed ; and this, once having taken root, will proceed to reform the outer tracts of the soul in accordance with itself. The longing for a good life, to be effectual, should be religious—that is, induce an attitude of self-surrender to the Divine. This manner of the entrance of the spiritual into the soul we shall see later to have been signified by the doctrine of justification by faith.

Indeed, it seems to be hardly possible for the mental nature, apart from spiritual influence, to acquire the rationality and goodness and love which constitute the ideal of conscious life—that is to say, to realise these principles implicitly so that the various acts and states of consciousness should be in accordance with them ; for there cannot be actual continuous consciousness at the conceptual level, but only transitory and fragmentary acts and states of consciousness partially determined by implicit knowledge and habits. But to act and be conscious in accordance with these principles is requisite for that development of the soul which the growing spiritual life requires. Hence the spiritual life must itself produce that external life which, reacting on the inward state of the soul, makes the soul more and more capable of the spiritual life. And that the spiritual life may have power to do this, overbearing the contrary tendencies of habits and desires, it must, in its early stages at least, be constantly reinforced from the Divine source which first gave it birth. Such at least seems to be the significance of the doctrine of grace. Then, when the spiritual is dominant in the soul, the conceptual life will be a working out of the principles of reason and goodness and love. The ideal implied in the human may be realised in the human, though implicitly and fragmentarily, as explained, through the constraining power of the Divine united to the human.

At the beginning of the spiritual in the soul the rightness of the volitional aspect of the consciousness seems considerably to exceed in importance the rightness of the other twain. For the will, from its very nature, sets itself to determine the rest of the soul, whereas thought and emotion do not. And so religious teachers have been apt to insist on morality rather than on wisdom or good emotion. Jesus Christ, indeed, seems rather to have called for love—not, indeed, as mere emotion, but love that naturally issues in deeds of service. But a complete spiritual life, we should opine, would require for its basis a development of the mental life in its various main aspects, much as a full mental life requires a modicum of development in the various main parts of the perceptual and physical life. Surely the growth of intellect and æsthetic sensibility are not merely incidental developments of the soul, of no use as it attains spiritual life ; rather are they requisites to the growth of a complete spiritual life, as the feeling of the Divine which accompanies them suggests. And if this be so, religion will be seen to demand, not only goodness of the will, but also occupation of the soul with truth and beauty, that the spiritual life may grow in its entirety. Love for God and for man will be exercised in encouraging in humanity the growth of the manifold nature of spirit.

Connected also with the experience of the spiritual is the expectation of great change even in the physical nature of man. To some extent this seems to be based upon actual cures of diseases and enhanced bodily powers proceeding from spiritual life. The miracles which have attended strong religious movements seem to be instances of the spiritual transforming matter to serve its purposes. Even legendary tales of miracles may be thought to be indications of a true intuition that the spiritual will ultimately determine everything as it wills. But also there is suggested by the spiritual even in its infancy an ideal of life which would demand a different physical constitution from that of ordinary mortal mankind. And the spiritual is apt to give a sense of unlimited power to satisfy all the wants of the soul. Hence there arises belief in the ending of death, escape from the limitations connected with the physical, and the acquisition of vastly greater powers of perception and memory and control of environment. And the ending of death suggests the ending also of its correlative—namely, birth, and consequently also of sex. Indeed, the souls who have attained such an ideal as the early experience of the spiritual indicates (if and in so far as they have a corporeal existence) will have bodies that are tractable instruments of the spiritual life.

Such, then, appears to be the spiritual, with the conditions of its birth and growth and the effects on the rest of human nature already experienced or foreshadowed. But is there good ground for supposing that the Universe is such as to favour the growth of the spiritual? May we believe that the Universe is itself spiritual within and spiritually self-determined?

# APPENDIX

## LOVE

There seem to be two elements in love: first, wish or will to benefit another; secondly, harmonious intercourse of one person with another or the desire for that.

The former element is more prominent in philanthropy. One desires the good of those one benefits, but does not necessarily want a lasting union with them. One may even feel a measure of repulsion for the degraded. No doubt, the Christian philanthropist bears in mind the ultimate perfectibility of depraved souls, and may be said to love the germ of goodness latent in them; but it is not union with this goodness, either in its present inchoate, or in its future developed, condition that is the spur to his work. Nor, again, can his motive be said to be his own participation in the communion of all the saints, as including those persons whom he is now endeavouring to reclaim. For such an idea may not be present to his mind, and even if it did occur to him, he would probably not feel that just these individuals would add anything in particular to his life in that society,

Now the duty to love one's neighbour as oneself, in the sense of acting as if the welfare of another were of equal importance with one's own, is a clear consequence of rationality of will. For reason, *qua* reason, sees things objectively—that is, sees reality as it really is, independently of the fact that it is the reason of some particular subject. Therefore reason will not value the welfare of the subject whose reason it is higher than the equal welfare of any other subject. Objectively considered, my well-being is not, other things being equal, one jot more important or worthy of being preserved and increased than the well-being of any one else ; and if I am rational in thought I shall see that, and if I am rational in will I shall embody that truth in action by impartially aiming at the greater benefit, be it my benefit or my neighbour's. In this way, to love one's neighbour as oneself is a necessity for every being who is perfectly rational. The fact that we are not bound to treat the welfare of the dumb animals on a par with our own is not opposed to this principle, since, presumably, animals are capable of receiving less good and less harm than human beings.

The second element in love is the tendency of a personality to increase and improve its own life through interaction and union with another personality. This element is more prominent in the love of kindred and intimate friends. It appears in physical passion, in ordinary companionship, in friendship between persons of like intellectual and practical abilities and interests, powerfully in fellowship between persons of the same religious devotion, and it may be thought to culminate in spiritual union in a heavenly life. In fact, only in immediate contact of soul with soul, such as hardly exists in man's mortal condition, will love obtain that which it wants.

Each of the two elements in love assists the other. For on the one hand, a person naturally desires to make and keep good a life which is valuable to himself. And besides, intimacy helps him to realise that the other person equally with himself deserves to be benefited. On the other hand, in doing good one is likely through the intimate association to expand one's own personality in intercourse with other personalities and so to feel affection for them. And good work is assisted by sympathy, and sympathy is nigh to affection.

We may add that with the growth of the soul affectionate communion becomes more and more important as a kind of doing good. And so the two elements of love—namely, doing good and affectionate intercourse—become one.

The ideal human life seems to be one in which each unit would conduct his life on the principle of doing the best for all souls impartially, though, owing to the need for division of labour, he would work more for certain souls ; and in which he was able and ready to sympathise and have affection for any with whom he might come into relation and who needed his help, but he would have intimate, affectionate communion with a few.

## CHAPTER II

## GOD

MANIFOLD proofs have been offered of the existence and nature of God. There are the three classical arguments: the ontological, that perfection necessarily exists; the cosmological, that there must have been a first cause; the teleological, or argument from design in Nature. These, as is well known, were criticised and rejected by Immanuel Kant. The teleological (which Kant called the physico-theological) was the only one for which he professed any respect: "It is the oldest, the clearest, and most in conformity with human reason." It is to be noted, however, that its worth has been for some minds diminished by the biological doctrine of natural selection, according to which organisms, with all their intricate and minute adaptation of part to part, may seem to have come into being through the agency of a few simple forces of Nature.

Kant offered in place of these proofs what he called a postulate of pure practical reason. The moral law, he argued, demands that moral goodness and happiness, the two elements of the highest good, shall be ultimately combined. Now only such a being as is conceived in the idea of God can ensure that this shall be so. As we have seen, religion comes in some measure at least from the demand that the Universe shall respect and further the highest values of human nature. But this seems to be rather a reason why God is believed in than a rational ground for that belief.

The rationality of the Universe, it has been argued, is implied in scientific induction, and the moral trustworthiness of the Universe is implied in human purpose and work. "Our activity in the Universe," writes Alexander Fraser in "Philosophy of Theism," "is dependent on the optimist faith, that the Universe with which we are in constant communication through experience must be morally trustworthy—perfectly good omnipotent Power or Personality being therein omnipresent." "The extinction of theistic faith is the extinction of reason in man."[1] This is kindred to Kant's postulate, but is more far-reaching.

Some metaphysicians have furnished an argument based on an idealist theory of knowledge. All objects of perception, they have contended, imply a subject of perception. The material world is, therefore, dependent on consciousness. But since it continues to exist when human consciousness is withdrawn, as is evident from the fact that we come back to find processes advanced of which we saw the commencement, it must be dependent on a universal subject or consciousness. Now a mind which is continually aware of the whole of the material world is such a being as monotheistic religion declares to exist.[2]

We may notice in addition: the argument from conscience, as being the voice of God to the soul;

---

[1] Pp. 248 and 331.

[2] "Introduction to the Philosophy of Religion," by Principal Caird, pp. 147–50; "Contentio Veritatis," "The Ultimate Basis of Theism," by Dr. Rashdall.

the argument from the existence of reason and moral goodness in humanity, as implying a reason and a goodness no less great for their cause ; and the argument from the prevalence throughout the human race of belief in a Divine Being.

Furthermore, religious men have seemed to themselves to enjoy communion with a Divine Being, acquiring thereby joy and peace of heart and moral strength, and through such mystical experiences and their results have had a firm belief in such a God as the higher religions present.

But over against all these arguments stands the fact of evil. Not only is it illegitimate to infer to the principle of the whole of the Universe from the minute portions of it with which we have but superficial acquaintance, but that part of it which we know bears a character inconsistent with the assumption that the Universe originates in a being of perfect goodness and wisdom. The limitations of our knowledge would, in any case, prevent us from certainly knowing that the Universe was created and is controlled by such a being, but they do not prevent us from knowing that the Universe is not altogether the work of such a being, since, if it were, it would have no flaw or blemish. Pain, misery, disease, ugliness, immorality have occurred and do occur. They are facts of experience, and can stultify certain declarations about what is not experienced. The producer must be judged by reference to the product. A perfectly good and wise being would and could create only what is perfectly good. The World is partly evil, and, therefore, it is not wholly created and controlled by a perfectly good and wise being. And if, indeed, God were not only perfectly good and wise, but also, as has been asserted, omnipotent, the World would not only be free from evil, but even infinitely good.

Let us, then, surrender the contention that the World is wholly controlled by a perfectly good and wise being. We could not, indeed, accept as God a Creator who was so deficient in goodness as to produce a World so seamed and shot with evil, unless this evil were a necessary condition of greater good ; but we could worship a Creator whose will was in a measure frustrated by perversity in other conscious beings and seriously limited by the crassness of matter, or even a Creator whose knowledge was inadequate to the government of the World without hitch or irregularity. We will, then, consider carefully the World in which we find ourselves, that we may, if possible, gain a reasonable idea of the origin of the World and of the unseen power or powers which control it.

What, then, is humanity? In what kind of world does humanity find itself? By what processes, so far as science informs us, have the World and humanity come to be what they are?

We are thinking, willing, feeling entities attached to masses of matter, which we know as organic—that is, subject to certain forces other than the physical and chemical forces. Individually, our memory extends back only a few years, and a short while previously these masses of organic matter, our bodies, came into existence, being produced by other human beings. The bodies of these were produced by yet other human beings, and so on. After an existence of a few years, the conscious entity becomes dissociated from the body, and the body itself disintegrates. The human race, of which we are members, and in which some of us form part of the connecting link between the past members and the future members, has—if we may trust the evidence—grown out of an animal species that had not the intelligence which is man's distinguishing quality. Indeed, the ancestry of the now existing human beings goes back to minute unicellular organisms, such as we should place in the lowest rank of the scale of living creatures.

The human body and all organisms appear to require a certain kind of environment. There must be certain elements of matter in certain quantities, and a temperature between certain limits. And these conditions, if we may trust science, have come into being on the whole gradually. They exist on the surface of a globe of matter, revolving round a much larger globe of matter, from which emanate heat and light. And it is probable that both the globe on which life exists and that which warms and lights it have developed out of a yet larger globe of more rarefied matter through contraction, the central portion becoming the heat-giving body, while portions which separated off became or are becoming cool globes revolving round the former, on one of which we find ourselves. The existence, then, of conditions suitable for life on the surface of this globe have been produced by a process of solar evolution. But it is also to be noticed that the Sun and its planets are related to each other, not by the chemical forces of matter, but by forces which are common to matter under all conditions in which we know it, namely, momentum, inertia, gravitation, and the radiation both of heat and of the two forces which may be resolved into heat, light and electricity.

Conscious or psychical existence—such as constitutes ourselves—seems to be of an intrinsically worthier order than the material existence of the inanimate world. Indeed, it is hard to conceive that there could be any absolute value other than in some form of consciousness. It seems that in insensitive nature by itself there is no good or evil, whereas in human life there may be good which is good *per se* (and also in a lesser degree in animals) and the possibility of greater good through certain kinds of development.

If this be taken in connection with the foregoing, the idea is apt to suggest itself that the material world (including the organic) is a purposed preparation for consciousness, in which alone intrinsic good or value can be. Human consciousness, as we ordinarily know it, is dependent on very elaborate conditions. It is dependent on a set of conditions which themselves depend on others—consciousness is conditioned by organism, and human consciousness by a special kind of organism; organism by a certain kind of combination of chemical forces; this combination of chemical forces by a certain kind of relation of large material bodies interacting in physical forces. It looks, then, as if these conditions were arranged by a power which acts or acted with a view to the production of the good to be obtained in human consciousness, or in that for which human consciousness is a preparation—in other words, as if the material environment of human life were largely the result of final causation.

All this, stated as direct inference, would be seen to imply an argument based on the theory of chances. It would be of the same kind as that by which we ordinarily infer that a complicated whole of neatly adjusted parts which serves some definite end was produced, partly at least, by intelligence which contemplated the end and considered the means to attain it. It is conceivable that an intelligible book might be written through some one choosing letters at random and setting them in the order in which they chanced to come. But in any given case we judge such a mode of origin to be so improbable that we unhesitatingly attribute the representations of the ideas in the book to an intelligent mind ; though there is, indeed, this difference, that any one composing a book by this method would be likely to announce it, so that, it not being announced, we may conclude that it did not happen so. The number and complexity of the conditions required for human life are probably as great as those required to represent a connected series of ideas such as is found in any human book represented by the shape and order of letters. It would seem, then, that there is an enormous probability that the material conditions of human life were prepared through the agency of intelligence.

And yet is this conclusion so certain? Can we insist so strongly on the improbability of the conditions of life having come by chance? For, after all, this globe is but one small unit among many millions of suns with their planets. And some of the planets of our solar system appear to have conditions which would preclude the existence of such highly developed organic life as we know. Given an infinite scope, a minute chance such as that of composing a long, intelligible book through choosing letters at random, or the apparently far more minute chance of the conditions of human life coming into being of themselves, becomes a certainty. Nor can we count it wonderful that we happen to be in one of those rare places where consciousness exists, seeing that, being conscious ourselves, we must necessarily find ourselves in such a place.

It is true, indeed, that the conditions upon which conscious life depends are manifold and complex. But science seems more and more to show that they have arisen out of the previous state of the World as natural consequences. If it be supposed that the matter forming our solar system was once one hot, slowly revolving globe of much thinner consistency, it was surely inevitable with the existing laws that it should contract, the while from the rapidity of the revolution throwing off smaller bodies, which would continue moving round. The central portion would retain a high temperature long after the smaller bodies, revolving round it, had cooled. The alternation of day and night, winter and summer, which has such influence on organic life, would come as a part of the inevitable development of the solar system according to physical laws. Then, when the planets had cooled, there would arise new states of the chemical substances in accordance with chemical laws that had previously been in abeyance. Water, for instance, which could not exist when the temperature was high, would necessarily come into being where the temperature had become low enough, hydrogen and oxygen being together in certain quantities. The appearance of organism does, no doubt, constitute a novelty. But how can we prove that inorganic matter may not have contained latent tendencies to the organic, as hot hydrogen and oxygen contained latent tendencies to form water?

It has, indeed, been suggested that germs may have been transmitted in meteors from other globes such as the Earth.

Highly complex organisms as the human body have seemed to render a naturalistic view of the World absurd in the extreme. And yet the hypothesis of natural selection has been accepted by scientists of repute as affording a sufficient explanation of the growth of organisms, a few simple laws being presupposed. Grant that every organism tends to produce its like, though with small variations, which are naturally perpetuated from generation to generation—and the whole of organic evolution seems to be an inevitable consequence. For in the struggle for food and space certain highly organized forms will prevail at the expense of others less highly organized. The result will be the growth of more and more complex bodies with ever neater adjustment of part to part. Thus the protozoon developed into the human body through fission and realisation of the potentialities of protoplasm. Some have wondered at the origin of the variations, which form, so to speak, the material for the principle of survival of the fittest to work on. But the wonder would be were there no variations amid the different physical influences which may bear on the germ. Organism varies under varying conditions, as the waves of the sea change continually through the force of water and wind. But granted variations in indefinite directions, it will necessarily ensue that those which best enable the organism to fight and live in the struggle for existence will survive at the expense of the others, and among the beneficial variations will be some tending to size and complexity.

Certainly consciousness seems a kind of being so different from matter in any form that it could not have come into existence from matter by a natural process. And yet may not the potentiality of consciousness have lain in matter in the same way as the potentiality of water lay in the hot hydrogen and oxygen in primeval gaseous globes, and as we might suppose the possibility of organism lay in certain chemical substances? Perhaps, it may be suggested, all organism, if not sensitive, has a latent sensitiveness. And if that be so, the advantage of sensitiveness in the struggle for existence would favour its development ; that is, the variations of greater sensitiveness would give the victory to the organisms which had them over others which had happened not to have them, so that the former would propagate their kind and the latter would die out.

The powers of Nature were once regarded as living beings, and worship was accorded them. Little by little, however, it came to be perceived that they do not resemble other living beings, inasmuch as they act according to definite rules, with little or no variation. Hence the Divine being, no longer to be identified with Nature, was held to be the maker and controller of Nature. And so evidence of the Divine was looked for at those occasions in the course of Nature when new elements and forces and new combinations of elements and forces seemed to arise. But of those changes and developments of Nature which appeared to spring from the operation of intelligent will, more and more have been demonstrated by science to happen according to definite rules. Since, therefore, the supposed occasions of Divine creation and control have been diminishing, it looks as if they will ultimately be reduced to zero. But religion is not altogether content with even a certain number of occasions in which God operates on the World, but demands that the World as a whole should be the outcome of the operation of God. And so science and religion are at one in dissatisfaction with the idea of a God who modifies World-processes which normally go on apart from Him. Not only are we unable to show occasions when God must have interfered with the course of orderly causation, but the kind of God which such interference would imply is unacceptable to the religious sense.

Thus the proof of the existence of a creating and controlling Spirit of the Universe eludes our grasp! At first the spectacle of the organization of matter upon which depends human life—the mode of existence most capable of intrinsic value of any that we know intimately—presents itself as indubitably the handiwork of a being of great intelligence and power. More beautiful, more intricately wrought, of far vaster extent than any human work, through the self-evident principles of reason, it indicates—so it appears—if not precisely the God of religion, yet a conscious being with sufficient wisdom and might to control the World for the fulfilment of good purposes. But when we look more closely into natural processes, we see everywhere, not the free adaptation of means to end, but the rigid uniformity of cause and effect; not purpose, but necessity. Let us examine minutely any portion of the long and extensive processes of evolution, and we find it apparently but another instance of the regular operation of forces, already well known as inexorable laws of Nature. Viewed from a distance as a whole, the World appears as the work of rational will; on a near scrutiny, each section is seen to be linked to the neighbouring sections through unintelligent causation. And if each momentary stage of the cosmic development is thus conditioned by the preceding, we cannot logically postulate a rational purpose as condition of the cosmic development as a whole, since that would be to give an otiose explanation thereof, it being already sufficiently accounted for. And yet the World certainly looks as if it were to some degree at least the work of wisdom and benevolence.

But this has been but a general and superficial view of the World. We might hope by means of a careful and systematic examination of experience to obtain more definite results. And what, after all, do we experience?

It seems that previously to reflection the contents of our visual consciousness are identified with things which we suppose to exist and exert force whether we perceive them or not, and upon which our life in large measure continually depends. When the eyes are opened, the consciousness, if there be sufficient light, appears to include suddenly some of the surrounding things, or rather some part of them; when the eyes are shut consciousness appears, as it were, to retire wholly into the body, except so far as it is stimulated through other senses, which, however, do not give such a feeling of inclusion of remote objects by the consciousness. But physical science claims to prove that these images are caused by waves of some medium acting on the visual nerves and these nerves transmitting some kind of influence to the brain, differences in colour being due to differences in the waves. This apparently indicates that we do not immediately perceive the relatively permanent things outside our bodies, but that the contents of our consciousness are effects of states of our bodies caused by the things outside.

Is, then, the unsophisticated man under so great an illusion as to the external world? Granted that it is an illusion, yet it does not interfere with the man's practical dealings with the things upon which his bodily welfare depends. And since cognition serves life, we must not expect a metaphysically true knowledge at the earliest stages of man's development. Human beings —on the above hypothesis—while regarding the visual images as the relatively permanent external things and seeming to themselves to modify them and move about among them through use of their limbs and thereby to interact with one another, in reality are causing modifications of unknown things, which modifications cause changes in the sense-experience of human beings. And the sense-experience of various persons correspond through their being causally connected in similar ways with the same unknown things, so that in their communications with one another, while actually referring to analogous parts of their sense-experience, they seem to themselves to be referring to the same things and processes. But as the intellect grows, reasons suggest themselves for doubting that the shaped and coloured things are the relatively permanent things which condition the life. And then philosophers theorise as to the nature and existence of the external world, with a variety of conclusions—realistic, idealistic, agnostic. Both the original unthinking acceptance of visual images and the subsequent doubt and discussion about sense-experience and matter should be regarded as right and natural. The former is determined by the practical needs of human life, and therefore should not be assumed *a priori* to be metaphysically true ; the latter is the activity of the intellect through which it attempts to arrive at the truth—an effort, we may hope, not destined utterly to fail. We need not therefore be discouraged if our philosophy should present such reasons for trusting sense-experience or indicate such relations of that sense-experience to the things and processes which condition human life as are totally foreign to the ordinary practical and pre-metaphysical mind of man.

What, then, do we know and what can we know about the existences other than ourselves which condition our life? Let us carefully consider our data and the conclusions to be drawn from them.

In visual perception the ego seems to have a consciousness extending widely in front. Therein are, or may be, various coloured shapes, some of which move. Under certain conditions the field of vision appears as a flat surface, but normally depth seems to be actually experienced, not merely inferred. Also, more distant objects, though they subtend smaller areas in the field of vision than smaller objects nearer at hand, seem sometimes to be actually experienced as bigger than the nearer smaller objects, though there are limits to this power of experiencing relative size at different distances. It is as if there were different scales—or rather, any number of scales—for both size and distance in the consciousness, one or another being used according to requirements. Probably, as epistemologists have contended, considerable arrangement and modification of the data of sense takes place, though the percipient is not conscious of this.

Now we find that these coloured shapes change according to definite rules ; some changes seem to go on independently in the individual masses, and some are conditioned by the proximity of other masses, with occasional reciprocity. But these rules do not apply to the sense-world precisely, but to the sense-world conceived as continuous, with the differences due to the positions of the percipients eliminated. The shape and size and positions of the masses are supposed to be in accordance with hypothetical direct vision continuous and from every point. To this hypothetical world of continuously existing shapes, constructed in imagination from combination of views from different points, with the differences due to differences of the points eliminated, the laws of Nature apply.

These changes are not generally intelligible to us, from sense-experience at least. But they do, on the whole, conform to the spatial qualities of this hypothetical world. We do not know what causes motion, but we can calculate correctly the differences in position of various objects resulting from certain motion. We do not know how light is transmitted, but we can deduce the visibility and appearance of things from new points of view. We do not know what makes hardness or softness, but we foresee whether a hard mass will or will not be able to pass or to stand between two or more other stationary hard masses. We do not know what gravitation is, nor why it increases and diminishes in a certain ratio, but we do accurately estimate its force at certain distances in accordance with the plan in our minds of the relative positions of bodies.

Besides all this, we do seem to ourselves to conceive why a moving thing continues to move in a straight line except in so far as it is stopped or diverted. And we also seem to understand why two bodies cannot occupy the same space at once.

But material causation is generally unknown to us. Colour and other sense-qualities, together with shape and motion, enable us to distinguish kinds of causation; and having distinguished them, we can infer with considerable accuracy the sensible effects which will follow. But what the forces really are remains unknown. And herein lies the ground of distinction between the "primary" and the "secondary" qualities. We can see why, if things have the shapes and positions and motions which we attribute to them in the said hypothetical world, granted certain processes, there will be certain results. We can see why, granted light and gravitation, the motions and positions and dimensions of the heavenly bodies will result in now a conjunction of certain planets and now an eclipse. But we cannot see why one chemical substance, distinguished by certain sensible effects, and another chemical substance, distinguished by certain other sensible effects, when brought into contact under a certain general condition distinguished also by sense, should together be transformed into yet another chemical substance distinguished by yet other sensible effects. Colour and other kinds of sensation do not enable us to see how substances affect each other, as the shape and position and motion of bodies enable us to see why certain other spatial relations and qualities of these bodies ensue. There is nothing in what we may call the matter in distinction from the form of the sense-experience itself to give us a clue, so far as we can see. We can only discover by observation that certain colours and other sense-qualities are accompanied by tendencies to certain changes, which are known through sense-experience, and then we may inductively infer laws of physical causation ; and through the axiom of the uniformity of Nature we have confidence that these hold good generally. It is to be observed that closely resembling sense-qualities may be conjoined to widely different forces, and vice versa.

It is, then, as if in these visible shapes various forces were active, the nature of which is unknown to us, though we can distinguish them by their sensible effects. But we can go farther than this. There are forces which act through the apparently empty space between these bodies. And the sensible effects of certain experiments are such as would follow from the bodies being composed of minute invisible particles to which the forces attach, on the analogy of the sensible effects of like experiments with larger visible masses.

And then we may observe that consciousness is conditioned by certain masses which we call "human bodies" ; and on the foregoing hypothesis we judge that there is some movement or action of invisible existence between the visible masses and the sense-organs. And examination of the human bodies themselves suggests, on the same principles of inference, that the sense-organs being thus stimulated occasion some movement or action in another part of the body, called the "brain," as a result of which there occurs vision and other sense-perception.

We have been tracing out the dealings of human thought with sense-experience—its mental corrections of and additions to the facts which seem to be presented to the consciousness, till it is forced to change its notion of the very nature of the immediately presented facts themselves. Starting with naïve realism, as it is called, the mind makes corrections and inferences, the earlier unconsciously, the later consciously and deliberately ; and in the course of this process discovers a reason for disbelieving that the contents of its visual perception have real and independent existence. They must be rather images in consciousness which cease to exist when the vision ceases. But if so, are there independently existing things, as was supposed, and what can we discover about them?

By the axiom of causation it is evident that our sensations must have some cause ; and as our consciousness is intermittent, that cause must exist, partly at least, independently of our consciousness. But besides this, even on the supposition of spontaneously arising existences, the regularity of our experiences implies some other existence which exercises regular influences on our sensibility. Our experiences are sufficiently according to rules that we can predict with a high degree of certainty and minuteness what they will be. On the other hand, there is a large element of uncertainty and novelty in them, which seems to indicate that they are not drawn from our subconscious soul. Anyhow, the causes of our sensations in large measure exist outside our consciousness.

The supposition that our sensations are in part caused by spatial existences of such shape and relative position as we naturally attribute to the objects of our perception is in accordance with our conception of space. As remarked above, certain forces and resistances assumed, we can understand why objects with certain spatial qualities and relations behave in a certain way. We not only predict rightly, but predict in accordance with understood necessities of the situation conceived as spatial. Now, since the hypothesis that things have the spatial qualities which we naturally believe they have is thus in accordance with experience, we may regard it as verified. There are, then, probably things shaped and mutually situated as our experience suggests, existing independently of us, which cause in us sensations. This independent existence is indeed not wholly so shaped and situated, since there must be influences transcending the apparently empty spaces, but it is so shaped and situated in some important respect. On the other hand, since colours and other sense-contents do not explain at all how things interact, but merely indicate differences in unknown qualities, we are not likewise driven to suppose that the independent existences have these qualities which we perceive.

On the same principle we can infer that there are units of existence, too small to be severally represented in sensation, such as science postulates—molecules and atoms and, may be, electrons. Granted a spatial world occupied as we seem to see it, it acts on our sensibility in such a manner as if things consisted of minute interacting particles of a number of varieties.

But what these things are, what the contents are of the shapes—the contents which correspond to the colour and feeling of sense-perception—is unknown to us. The shapes are in a certain respect the same as they seem to us, while the filings are, presumably, different from what they seem to us. These fillings cannot all be inert, self-contained, as colours and tactual sensations in the main appear, but at least some must be to some degree forces producing changes, or potentialities of changes which necessarily occur when the conditions arise. They must resemble rather, if we are to seek parallels in ourselves, desire and conation. Perhaps they are not to be perceived from the outside; but we must in a manner become the things if we are to know them.

Now consciousness, as we know it, especially in its higher forms, is conditioned by very special and complex arrangements of various kinds of units of this existence, which we may call "material," and the formation of these complexes of material units advanced considerably before the emergence in the World of consciousness. Moreover, these complexes or bodies require special conditions in the surrounding matter, which came into being previously to the bodies.

Nearer examination seems to reveal grades of material units, one of what we may call a higher kind being composed of a number of the next lower kind, but having also a special quality of its own. An animal body is composed of material units called cells. A cell is composed of material units called molecules, themselves combinations of atoms. An atom seems to be composed of yet smaller units, to which has been given the name "electron." There are apparently here at least three main grades—the organic, the chemical, and something lower, which we may call the physical. The units of each grade are respectively cells, atoms, electrons. In each there is a tendency for the units to mass together.

Of the origin of chemical existence we know little or nothing. But certain combinations and arrangements of chemical existence took place which provided the conditions for organism. And organism developing provided the conditions for consciousness.

An analogue to this is to be seen in consciousness itself. Conceptual consciousness supervened upon perceptual consciousness when the latter had undergone a certain development. And a higher form of consciousness, the spiritual, seems to supervene upon conceptual consciousness when it has undergone a certain development. But there is this main difference between matter and consciousness. The latter constitutes states of certain units—called "selves"—that remain identical throughout change and growth. But matter is a condition or part-cause of human consciousness, existing continuously and apart from human consciousness. Therefore the self, while uniting all three grades of consciousness, and being the subject without which they could not exist, does not unite with matter, nor is the subject of material existence. Intermediate between consciousness and matter in relation to the self stand what we may call the potentialities of consciousness—faculties, habits, memory. These are not just states of the ego as ideas and sensations are, and yet seem on occasion partially to emerge into consciousness.

A unit of organic existence—namely, a cell—depends upon a peculiar combination of chemical units. Likewise a unit of chemical existence seems to depend on a certain combination of physical units. These kinds of existence are differentiated by their modes of activity, whereby masses effect changes in themselves and in other masses, these changes being distinguished through differences in sense-experience resulting from them.

Thus organism is differentiated from inorganic chemical matter by the processes of nutrition, growth, and reproduction. It seems absurd to suppose that these processes are the result merely of certain combinations of chemical units acting chemically and physically. Rather is there another kind of force which, utilising the chemical and physical forces, effects changes which these forces could not effect by themselves. In the same way it is hard to think that the various chemical changes are just the result of physical units acting in combination through such forces as momentum and heat-vibration. In both cases there appears to be a unifying and controlling agency. This is manifest in organism in the power of recovery and adaptation to circumstances, which is unthinkable in a mass of chemical units each determined solely by its own nature in interaction with its neighbours. But further, a body composed of many thousands of cells appears, apart from consciousness, to be subject to some agency, other than the individual forces of the cells, determining the relations of the various parts.[1]

Apparently there was a time in the history of this planet when there was no organism. Can we at all conjecture whence this power came which controls a system of chemical particles? First of all, is the union of molecules into organic cells different in kind from the union of atoms of different sorts into molecules? For the compound molecule is apparently a unit of which the action is not the combination of the actions of its component elements. But we should notice that elements are distinguished largely by the kinds of unions they can form and their manner of doing so—in particular, by the heat they generate in the process. The behaviour of compounds might well be considered as the natural result of the elements combined in some unknown manner, at least in ordinary cases of combustion, since no strikingly new activities are produced ; the wonder rather consists in the process of combination to which the elements have an innate tendency. And generally in chemical processes the tendencies are towards states of comparative quiescence. Very different is the transition to organism with its distinctive modes of operation—nutrition, growth, and reproduction. And besides, it is doubtful whether organism would come into being merely through the proper combination and juxtaposition of the chemical substances. At least in our experience, it arises through the extension of already existing organism.

---

[1] Cp. Henri Bergson, "L'Evolution Créatrice," ed. 1909, p. 37 : "Un des plus remarquables naturalistes de notre temps a insisté sur l'opposition des deux ordres de phénomènes que l'on constate dans les tissus vivants, *anagenèse* d'un côte et *catagènese* de l'autre. Le rôle des énergies anagénétiques est d'élever les énergies inférieures à leur propre niveau par l'assimilation des substances inorganiques. Elles contruisent les tissus. Au contraire, le fonctionnement même de la vie (à l'exception toutefois d'assimilation, de la croissance et de la reproduction) est d'ordre catagénétique, descente d'énergie et non plus montée. C'est sur ces faits d'ordre catagénétique seulement que la physico-chimie aurait prise, c'est-a-dire, en somme, sur du mort et non sur du vivant."

But, be this as it may, whence comes organic existence? Is it latent in various chemical atoms, capable of being stimulated into life? And if so, is there one atom in each cell which is the unifying and controlling organic individual? Or, instead of being centred in any of the atoms, has it an existence distinct from the chemical particles, though interacting with them and controlling them?

At present organism seems to be derived from already existing organism. Hence one would judge that it is not latent in chemical matter in the same sense in which the forces exercised by a chemical compound are latent in the elements. But what of the beginning of organism on this planet, or in the World at large? For even if we entertain the hypothesis that life was brought in a meteor from a distant globe, we can hardly suppose a succession of life-bearing globes within meteoric reach of each other from all eternity. Originally, then, it seems that organism must have been latent in reality somehow more deeply.

Turning aside for a while, we may notice a few relations and qualities of the various grades of existence. First, the lower grades of existence behave according to simpler laws than the higher. One of the characteristics of organism, as distinguished from chemical and physical existence, is its great variation with differences in circumstances. Chemical and physical existence are adapted to the needs of organism in certain general modes. But more special adaptations are produced by organism acting on chemical matter, so that, changing its environment and its own body, it preserves and augments its life. Yet organism may be hindered and even destroyed by chemical and physical existence owing to the uniformity of these in modes of behaviour which are generally serviceable to organism. The Sun, acting uniformly according to natural laws, may one day help vegetation and another scorch it. Chemicals which in certain proportions to food stimulate life, may through natural causes come together in such quantities as to poison it. And generally, lower forms of existence which are utilised by higher forms may occasionally injure them. Inferior organisms prey on higher. Men may be attacked by animals. The animal appetites, if not subdued by the moral nature, may cause its degradation. In all these cases the lower reality is obeying the apparently immutable laws of its being. We should also observe that consciousness produces yet more adaptation to circumstances than organism alone, and conceptual consciousness more than the merely perceptual.

Secondly, certain amounts of changes in one kind of reality produce certain amounts of changes in another kind. Some of these changes may in this respect be considered positive and some negative. The total amount of this potential change appears to remain constant in any closed system of material bodies. Thus certain amounts of certain chemical changes are equivalent to certain amounts of momentum, which apparently belongs to the physical realm. Accordingly, there are laws of the equivalence of kinds of energy, and there is the law of the conservation of energy. This equivalence of changes is manifest as regards physical and chemical existence. And chemical energy seems to be transmuted into organic energy in nutrition, and to be then transmuted into physical energy in an organism's exercise of power. But the case is not so clear, as it is hard to determine in what manner there is organic energy distinct from chemical and physical, and how far the former may be derived from the latter. Again, that material energy may be transmuted into psychic energy, appears probable from the facts that consciousness causes changes in the material world, and that its activity depends somewhat upon the health of the body.

Thirdly, the higher kinds of reality tend to enlarge themselves by extending themselves through the lower. Thus plants absorb soil and water, and so grow and multiply. Likewise animals absorb the organic material of plants, and so grow and multiply. In the human mind the capacity for thought and will and emotion grows through contact with the deliverances of the senses. And we may divine that the spiritual will develop through permeating the mental nature.

How does this World come to be? What indications can we gather as to its origin? Is it the result of unintelligent causation, or of intelligent purpose, or of both combined?

In the first place, what shall we make of the suggestion that the complex bodies of the higher animals have resulted by natural selection inevitably from the organic laws of reproduction and variation? The whole has seemed explicable as the consequence of purely unintelligent causation, whereas a rational being would have chosen a less wasteful and cruel method of arriving at his ends. But granted that evolution followed inevitably from the working of the natural forces that were present from the beginning, we have still to inquire how it was that just those were operative which could produce these wonderful bodies which condition consciousness. How is it that reproduction takes place, and, moreover, tends to perpetuate variations that occur from time to time? How is it that this force should be so adaptable in its methods of working that through it protozoa begat protozoa, and their remote descendants, men, beget men? Granted this force acting according to this law, evolution might be thought to be inevitable. But the wonder is that there is the highly adaptable force of reproduction in the World. To attribute evolution to the natural law of organism is but to push back a little the question concerning materialistic necessity or rational purpose. For we find ourselves confronted with the problem as to the origin of the law of organism with its very special character. On the other hand, organic force does appear occasionally to operate in accordance with its law so as to produce living beings which must be judged useless, or even positively bad, in view of the goal of evolution. Instances are: excessive fertility, leading to starvation of multitudes; and prolific breeding of degenerates. It seems, then, that the general organic forces are due to rational purpose, but that they are allowed to operate in the World uncontrolled, or imperfectly controlled thereby. And yet the main tendency of organic evolution does not appear to have come of itself in this manner. Rather does it wear the aspect of the self-elaboration of organic existence in accordance with inner potentialities—almost evolution in the strict sense—though, indeed, with incidental waste and perversions due to uniformity of causation.

But we will examine more systematically the manner in which the World has come to be. There are various kinds of existence which have appeared in the World in succession, each later kind being conditioned by a certain state of the one immediately preceding, which state in each case did not exist from the first, but came to be. The relations of physical and chemical are comparatively obscure. But chemical existence underwent a certain elaboration—relatively small globes separated from the central globe and revolved round it; the central globe contracted, and the smaller globes contracted and cooled; there came into being solid carbon, water, and an atmosphere composed of oxygen and nitrogen on at least one of the smaller globes. Then organism arose on this same globe in certain masses of chemical matter of a special composition, and this too underwent an elaboration—part of a body was specialised for acquisition of nutriment, part for adapting the nutriment to the needs of the body, part for procreation. Then consciousness appeared in a part of certain bodies in which resided a regulative power over the other parts. And when this kind of consciousness had developed, a new kind of consciousness arose in the midst of the former and simpler kind, feeding upon it, as it were, and permeating it. And there appears to be yet a third kind of consciousness, which is born in the second kind of consciousness—much as the second was born in the first—when the second has grown to be of a certain character.

We see, then, that each kind of existence after the first required for its appearance very special conditions, consisting in a certain state of the kinds of existence previously active in the World. Now the question before us is, What brought it to pass that just these special conditions were realised?

We have to consider what causal connection there was between the kind of existence which appeared later and the kind of existence which appeared earlier. How did organism which had not yet come into being cause the special nature and development of chemical matter? How did consciousness, which had not yet come into being, cause the special nature and development of organism?

The explanation that is apt to suggest itself first is that there was final causation—that is, the idea of that which did not yet exist, being active in some purposive consciousness, caused action which produced the suitable conditions for it. In other words, some being corresponding to the notion of God made chemical existence so that it should furnish the conditions for organism and made organism so that it should furnish the conditions for consciousness.

But let us proceed carefully. Is there any way in which organism might have directly formed chemical matter? Certain forces, if they act at all, may improve and maintain the conditions for their action. A simple instance is a river which makes its own bed. In this case the momentum of the water pushes other matter out of the way, and so enables the water that follows to flow more directly to its goal. We may take as another instance vegetation growing in a barren soil and gradually collecting nutriment from the carbon dioxide in the atmosphere and using it again and again. Now, since organic existence apparently controls chemical existence, the idea occurs that organism originally formed chemical matter in respect of its inherent qualities. Likewise may consciousness be supposed to have formed organism.

But in what state of being did this happen? If we suppose latent organism in chemical existence which was thus operative, it cannot have been organism in each chemical atom individually, since organism requires a combination of various chemical atoms. Nor could consciousness in each chemical atom individually have done this, for a like reason. It must have been some power acting upon the atoms in common which thus diversified them. In other words, the preparation of the conditions of consciousness must have taken place through power embracing a number of particles, such as is realised—indeed, greater than what we see has been as yet in this way realised—through these very conditions. And this power must have been conscious, or, at any rate, some form of rational causation. There existed, therefore, prior to the consciousness which is appearing in organisms in the World, rational power not dependent on matter in the same way as is consciousness in the World, which formed matter to give the conditions of consciousness. We may suppose that it formed organism directly, and chemical and physical matter either directly or indirectly through organism. And in view of the similarity of the physical and chemical elements of which we have acquaintance, we may opine that the rational power which formed all this matter was in some sense one.

And this Creative Reason must be still in existence, for It would hardly have consented to Its own extinction. And surely Its function did not cease with the initial act of creation. And since will and thought tend towards their own perfection (for one does not deliberately and knowingly will the bad or believe the false), this Creative Reason, being, presumably, free from such limitations as pervert human reason, must be good and wise. And being good and wise, It will help souls towards the good and enter into loving communion with them. It must be some such reality as Christianity postulates in the idea of God.

But how are we to conceive creation? Is it that God has made separately the various kinds of reality so that they should interact duly, creating each as the time for it came, and setting it to be active and grow in the World? Or may we rather think of the various kinds of reality as already existing in interrelation before they became active in this order of being, and of God as in vital connection with them and so making each to be? The persistent interconnection of the kinds of reality, the fact of which is manifested through our experience, inclines us to the view, not that God created things by making them outside Himself, but that He created them, or perhaps in some sense eternally maintains them, by growing them and living in them.

So by slow and difficult argument, by hypothesis, by testing and rejecting, by bringing different facts into one view, we labour to understand the Universe. How often have inferences been found fallacious! How partial and superficial have the ideas of thinkers appeared with new scientific discoveries! How hopeless has seemed the quest for knowledge of the ultimate reality! And we labour on, trying to understand what it all is and whither it all tends.

And then, behold! The vision of truth for which we have longed and striven opens before us. How shall we describe or express it?

Creation is a great process of unfolding, of emergence of reality, stage by stage, into the state of being with which we are in sensitive communication. It is a certain vivification and emancipation, in regular sequence from the lowest to the highest, of parts of a system of reality that existed somehow else complete. It is an evolution from a mysterious unknown into this world, there to live and grow, of being, from its outermost shell inwards, till shall appear the holy life within.

In its unfolding or emergence into this state of being, reality is set to act and develop according to its own inherent laws in interaction with other reality in the same state of being. It behaves and grows according to rule, somehow independently of its source. One of the main kinds of reality emerges with a certain innate character which determines its development in preparation for the next main kind.

And yet there is evidence that the general course of the development of any main order of reality is in part determined by the constant emergence of more reality of the same order from the original source. This influence, being spread over a vast area, may be hard to test—that is, the divergences from the natural behaviour in accordance with the laws of the reality already in this form of existence may be in a small compass so minute as not to be verifiable. But the general development of one order of reality from its first emergence till the emergence of the next kind seems to be considerably determined by influence from the other world. The fact is that the emergence of any one kind of reality is not complete at the beginning. But it is a process which influences the development of the same kind of reality in this world. The Divine direction of evolution, we may opine, consists, except for any personal intercourse of God with souls, in continual emergence of reality, which coalesces with and modifies and replaces what has already emerged and undergone development.

But we must further observe that the development, and therefore, presumably, the emergence, of one order of reality does not cease with the first emergence of the next kind. This is signally manifest in organism, which undergoes modification to suit the growing power of consciousness. The human body itself has altered with the evolution of mind. And will not the spiritual nature, as it evolves, demand yet more change in the body of man? And may not a body suited to a spiritual life be even now in process of emergence from the other world and in the course of many generations take shape among us? With what wonder shall we watch the growth of man, bodily and mental and spiritual, considering that some transcendent nature is pressing forth out of the womb of the Eternal!

The physical and the chemical come first into activity, and then later the organic, all constituting the environment of souls. Then souls come into activity—first, their lower consciousness, consisting of sensation and perception, appetite and elementary desire; next, conceptual consciousness, with thought and purpose; and then spiritual life. All is one great process of unfolding, with free activity and growth of each kind of reality as it is unfolded. And as in them the spiritual is unfolded, souls become aware of a greater spiritual reality which is the primal life of the original order of existence. Souls believe themselves to be spiritually quickened by this unseen spiritual reality, to be spiritually united thereto, to be loved thereby as by another soul immeasurably greater. There seems to be spiritual intercourse between spiritual beings in the derived order of existence and a vast spiritual reality which produces and orders all else. Grade after grade of reality has unfolded and has developed, culminating with spiritual life in souls. But the great primal spiritual being remains, taking no special material body, while exercising influence through all things and operating most powerfully upon souls which are spiritually alive. That is God.

We now pass to the problem of evil. There are two allied questions: How is it that, if God be at once perfectly good and all-powerful, the Universe is not in every respect infinitely good? Secondly, how is it, even if we omit the attribute of omnipotence, that the Universe, which, presumably, originates entirely from a perfectly good being, contains evil?

As to the first, it must be admitted that if omnipotence be understood in the absolute sense of ability to effect infinite changes of any conceivable kind in infinitesimal time, which would include the power to bring every smallest portion of the Universe to the highest pitch of perfection in a moment and maintain it there to all eternity, God is not omnipotent. But then, the idea of omnipotence in this sense is a product of abstract reflection rather than of religion. To insist on this kind of omnipotence being attributed to God is to obscure the conception of His goodness. Thus, Augustine and Calvin, instead of cleaving to the idea of the universal goodness of God exhibited in unfailing love to all creatures, contended that the Divine will was inscrutable, being of a goodness beyond human comprehension, such as resulted for some in predestination to eternal life and for others in dereliction to eternal death. But to deny that the omnipotence of God is to be understood in this sense is not to deny its validity in every sense. Religion is a function of life, especially of spiritual life; it is the effort to promote life by bringing the soul into relation with the Spirit of the Universe. Hence the Divine omnipotence demanded by the religious nature would be such as is required to ensure the conditions of the development of human life, and especially spiritual life. And, since the conditions of the progress of life to this level have been provided, we may trust that God can and will provide the conditions of much further progress. But more adequate ground for this confidence will be attained from consideration of the second question.

To begin with, what is evil? We may define evil as the negative of good, or minus value. The two main forms of evil seem, in popular consideration, to be sin and pain, though it may be doubted whether these are evil in the same sense. But of both these it is felt that they ought not to exist, or, at least, both require accounting for on the hypothesis of an all-good Creator.

Instead of abstractly discussing the nature of evil, let us examine particular kinds of evil, and inquire how, so far as we can judge, they come and have come to be. Let us take a simple accident, such as a tile falling from a roof and injuring a passer-by. Both the dualistic theory of the two original principles of good and evil and the free-will theory of merited punishment seem out of place here. The simple facts are that natural forces, such as wind and rain, loosened the tile, and the natural force of gravitation caused it to fall, while the man's desires and deliberations caused him to be walking along by the house, as it happened, at the same moment as the tile was falling. It seems, then, that the injury took place from lack of perfect adjustment between a human being and his environment. On the other hand, there must be a large measure of such adjustment, else human life would be impossible. Some evil, then, comes into being because natural forces are imperfectly adjusted to man as he is. But this imperfect adjustment of natural forces follows from their uniformity. The gravitation which causes the tile to fall is requisite to keep human beings and all other bodies that aid human life on the surface of the globe ; that is to say, gravitation is adapted in general to human life. But, seeing that its operation is not suspended so as to prevent a hard object falling on a man or a man falling from a great height, we must deny that gravitation is adapted altogether in detail to human life. In other words, some evil is a consequence of the uniformity of the action of natural forces.

This explanation may be extended to many forms of evil : the scorching of life by the rays of the Sun ; the invasion of living bodies by disease germs, which are otherwise innocuous or even serve good purposes ; the death in barren regions of many animals which have been driven from fertile regions through the pressure of population ; the pain of a living being when suffering injury which the pain does not enable it to escape. All these follow from natural forces and agencies which serve the purposes of life as a whole, but, just because they act in accordance with rules, do not adapt themselves to the particular needs of all individual living beings.

One of the most appalling sources of animal suffering —which must surely be ranked as evil—is the immense flood of offspring that is continually poured forth in Nature.[1] The numerous progeny of animals forms the material upon which natural selection works. But the consideration of the struggle involved is apt to give a shock to the mind. In manifold directions organic life endeavours to spread, species contending with species, individual with individual, as if there were not one controlling power over all, but each animal lived for itself alone. If this species or family, we may ask, is destined to be stamped out in the struggle for existence, why, then, is there this force impelling it to be so prolific, with the result of premature death and useless suffering? Why such prodigal reproduction of kind, ending in pain? It is, however, another instance of a force which makes for good on the whole, owing to its uniformity, resulting in evil. Procreation goes on unfailingly, even when the offspring before long are painfully destroyed.[1]

---

[1] A striking paper on this subject, entitled "The Divine Fecundity," was read by Father George Tyrrell before the Oxford Philosophical Society not many days before his death. He made the remark afterwards, that, apart from the transcendental, he would sooner suppose the World to have been made by a fiend than by a good being.

Want of perfect adjustment between a living individual and its material environment, which behaves in modes generally serviceable to life, but because of uniformity incidentally antagonistic to it—this, then, is one cause of evil. It is to be noticed, however, that this want of adjustment may progressively vanish, and that, not through different behaviour on the part of the environment, but through the living being's acquiring foresight and control over its immediate environment. The approach of the harm may be discerned and stopped, or the environment may be so treated as to abolish or lessen the source of the danger. Thus, roofs may be constructed so as to be more durable ; droughts may be provided against by irrigation ; disease germs may be kept from invading the human body by cleanliness and disinfectants ; insensibility to certain forms of pain can be procured through drugs ; and it is conceivable that the procreation and distribution of sensitive beings may be in some way regulated.

---

[1] I was helped to this view by a passage from Darwin's letters quoted by Aubrey Moore, "Science and the Faith," p. 190: "I am bewildered, I had no intention to write atheistically. But I own that I cannot see as plainly as others do, and as I should wish to do, evidence of design and beneficence on all sides of us. There seems to me too much misery in the world. I cannot persuade myself that a beneficent and omnipotent God could have designedly created the Ichneumonidæ with the express intention of their feeding within the living bodies of caterpillars, or that a cat should play with mice. Not believing this, I see no necessity in the belief that the eye was expressly designed. On the other hand, I cannot anyhow be contented to view this wonderful Universe, and especially the nature of man, and to conclude that everything is the result of brute force. I am inclined to look at everything as resulting from designed laws, with the details, whether good or bad, left to the working out of what we may call chance. Not that this notion at all satisfies me." Laws designed for good, but the working out of them left to chance—this is practically the theory here set forth that evil is largely due to the fact that forces which are in general Divinely determined to be conditions of good, just because they are uniform, incidentally have bad effects.

But all evil does not seem to be due, directly at least, to the uniformity of action of the existence which constitutes the basis of life. Why, for instance, we may ask, is there any pain at all? The immediate answer is that pain prevents sensitive beings from allowing their bodies to be harmed. The pain of burning causes the limb to be withdrawn before it is irremediably injured, and through association of ideas fire is avoided in future. How does pain do this? In beings which are incapable of forming ideas of experiences and of reasoning about the conditions of their coming, there must be actual experience of good or evil, if conation is to take place. Animals have at least such capacity for rational action that they act for the fuller enjoyment of experienced good and the avoidance of experienced evil. Now in a case where the harm is special, namely, bodily injury, and the good is only the general good which consists in the continuance of the ordinary life, experience of evil is more suited than experience of good to procure the right behaviour.

And pain is experienced evil. Hence pain is suited to cause the right action in beings with sensitive or perceptual, but without conceptual consciousness, when there is occurring injury to the organism with which their life is connected. In escaping the pain they escape from the harm to which the pain is concomitant. But useless pain, as said above, is due to the uniformity of the action of matter, the nervous system giving painful sensations, even when there is no possibility of escape.

As the intelligence grows, so will dangers to the body be foreseen, and hence some pain, at least, will be avoided. With a perfect adaptation between the body and its environment the need for pain as a deterrent could not exist. Because the body makes adaptation between itself and its environment through inchoate conscious conation, pain (and also, indeed, pleasure) has to serve as a stimulus to the adapting conation. As the conation becomes more intelligent, the adaptation may take place through foresight of dangers, or, indeed, through non-painful indications of injury. We should, however, consider the idea that pain may be a feeling which, in a certain relation to other feelings, is an element in good, it being evil when in isolation.

The cause of sin has been attributed to human moral freedom, on the ground that, unless there were the possibility of wrong, the will would not be truly free. But we suppose the perfected saints and, indeed, God Himself to be both free and invariably to do right. Therefore the possibility of wrongdoing is not involved in freedom. Besides, to assert that the will is not free unless it may will evil, is to assign action to an indeterminate cause, which, in the last resort, is the apotheosis of chance. The fallacy is this, that in endeavouring to get at the pure self one empties it of all content, and hence arrives at something which might as well produce one thing as another, but, indeed, could produce nothing.

Yet some amount of self-determination—a degree of intelligence and moral causation—seems to be a necessary condition of sin. It is evidently due to the early stages of the growth of those faculties which, in their perfection, constitute wisdom and righteousness. The satisfactions of animal impulses become the ends of the rational will, and thus acquire undue power and importance. The lower nature, so to say, utilises the higher nature while yet weak and imperfect for its own ampler gratification. Let this serve provisionally as an account of sin.

As the higher faculties develop, the evil consequences of certain forms of sin will become apparent, and worthier objects for them will be discovered. Sin may be considered as an incident in the transition from the life governed by instinct to the life in which reason and the faculties which accompany reason are predominant. So that in this case also evil appears curable with progress.

Both pain and sin serve as stimuli to moral effort, and hence to the development of the moral character. The world's heroes have been developed through struggle with various forms of evil. Moreover, scientific inquiry has been stimulated by disease and pain. Since, therefore, heroism and knowledge count as good, evil here appears as a condition of good. But with a greater degree of moral and intellectual sensitiveness, the same amount of moral and intellectual effort may be called forth by the desire to improve conditions of life which are not bad, but only less good than they might become. So, in this respect also, the need for evil diminishes with human progress.

Yet again, suffering has helped the growth of religion and the spiritual life, as mystics have often asserted. Continual pain and unhappiness may, in some natures, compel the thoughts and desires to turn to a spiritual world and life in which these are not felt. In extreme cases, indeed, the concentration of the soul on the Divine may produce insensibility to physical anguish, as in the martyr thrilled with heavenly rapture. But in proportion as the Divine life is attained, so would the need of suffering as a stimulus to attain it disappear.

There is another fact which, if not exactly an evil in itself, seems to mar human life, and to cause immense sorrow—the fact of death. But death for the race, and also, we may suppose, for the individual, is a means to progress. A living creature when young has a measure of plasticity, or power of moulding itself in relation to its environment, which, as the moulding or habit-forming process goes on, is gradually lost. When once the crystallisation is complete, much further progress is impossible without destruction of the body and soul, so far as crystallised. Death, then, may be regarded as a means to the restoration of plasticity or to the power of self-adaptation and growth, both in the race and in the individual. Death clears away age with its fixity, to make room for youth with its mobility. And it also removes bodies which have suffered injuries that cannot be remedied, new uninjured bodies taking their place. Death is part of a great renovating process of life. But the highest religion looks forward to a condition of life in which death is no more. Human souls will be in close conjunction with the

Spirit of God, and hence enjoy a continuous life, being capable of renovating their bodies without such a break as is necessary at a lower stage. We may suppose that in animal and human life the development and use of latent powers require a high degree of crystallisation. The adults—that is, the individuals in whom the nature of the species has thus crystallised—protect and help on the life of the species, which contains a core always capable of various growth. When the Divine life has come, plasticity and power will be united in the same individuals. So death also seems to belong only to the earlier stages of the development of souls, if we may trust the religious consciousness.

Evil and imperfection, then, seem to spring from the conditions under which life develops, but to be destined progressively to disappear as life attains its ideal. There is, therefore, no need to postulate the existence of a creative evil being. For evil is due to the fact that spirit is not dominant in this world of change and growth. The unintelligent forces of the World for the while spoil and hinder the free action and growth of conscious life, and life itself while immature needs to be forcibly schooled and corrected. Or more generally, evil is due to the fact that the World is created through the lower forms of reality coming into existence before the higher.

We may even so wonder why the lower forms of reality are allowed to play such havoc with the germinating life. As to this uniformity, why could not it be modified when it is the cause of sudden and terrible destruction, as in the falling rock, the landslide, the earthquake, the flood, the volcanic eruption? What purpose can it then serve to allow the forces of gravitation and heat and momentum to run their natural course?

An attractive explanation is suggested by the so-called mechanical theory of the World. Machines are the work of minds, being instruments for the fulfilment of purposes. Wherefore if the World is a true machine, it must have been constructed by a mind (or minds) for the fulfilment of its (or their) purposes. And the material world suffers from the defect of other machines: it operates uniformly. As minute adaptation to individual requirements cannot be attained through machinery made by man, so, we may conjecture, the mechanical forces of Nature cannot be adapted to the ever-varying requirements of the varieties of life. But machines are useful in that more work can be accomplished through them than through direct application of the human mind and force to each several object. May it not be that God uses mechanical modes of operation—that is, works uniformly according to definite rules—in order that He may effect greater good through extending the sphere of operation more widely, at the cost of not producing perfect adaptation of environment to the infinite variety of individual living beings? Meanwhile, however, the individuals learn more and more to control their immediate environment, and thus make that adaptation which they lacked—each, so to speak, a deity in a little world which, in conjunction with his fellows, he fashions and orders for their own security and happiness.

Still, the uniformity of material forces does serve a good purpose. For life could not, so far at least as we can see, exist *in vacuo*. It must have objects of a more or less settled nature upon which to exert itself. To put it differently, there must be firm ground to stand on or take off from. In ordinary life we see how character develops through dealing with material things, just because these are susceptible to human influence, but only in a limited degree. Accordingly, we may opine that uniformly acting reality is an eternal constituent of the Universe. This, however, does not imply that the uniformity might not on occasion be modified to the advantage of developing life.

We were led to think of this World as in process of development, the end being a high form of conscious life in suitable environment. Evil appears to be an incident in one or more of the earlier stages of the development of the World ; and so the problem of evil seems to reduce itself into the question, Why must these earlier stages be gone through? And this, again, resolves itself into two questions : first, Why is there development at all? and, secondly, Why does development proceed from the lower to the higher? As to the first, let it suffice to say that the highest values require movement, and, in particular, process of change in which good is striven for and realised. Then as to the second, the process of realisation of good is more intense when there is an actual change of quality in existence than when the supreme good is in activity from the first, controlling and organizing all the growth. Certainly the ultimate control remains with the supreme principle of good, namely, God ; but for the sake of the whole there is produced, in relative separation from the supreme principle, an order of reality in which the lower kinds come into existence and partially develop before the higher, and the highest finally takes control, being in closer connection with the supreme principle, and organizes and further develops all the others.

But even the evil which inevitably results from this method of the formation of a world intensifies the process of the realisation of good, and so is not to be accounted altogether undesirable. Allied to this is the feeling that it were a grievous misfortune for any soul not to experience limitation and pain and struggle ; for that were to be kept from the full possession of reality. These give something which is otherwise unattainable. They are essential to the intensest love—the love wherein God and souls live in union.

The origin and nature and goal of the World are now in outline before us. We open our eyes to behold the order of existence taking shape about us and through our agency, and discern a slow unfolding of new and higher reality. And we believe in a supreme Spirit of good as the principle of all, and of whose nature we potentially are and will actively become. And we present ourselves to be spiritually quickened by that Spirit.

But we cannot but be aware of infinity, the infinity of space and the infinity of time, and therefore worlds and world-processes without end. Shall we be awed? Or shall we rejoice at the thought of the infinitude of good? We gaze out for a brief interval into the limitless beyond, and then return to know and work and love.

Our God—our own God who loves us—we know and love. Love is the supreme—spiritual love, which is living communion of soul with soul. And that God is. "God is love, and he that abideth in love abideth in God, and God abideth in him." This is the essence of the Christian doctrine of God. To study the World is to trace out a growing system of reality—to see how all springs from one principle, each part and element belonging to a great unity—all derived from Spirit, from God, from Love.

## CHAPTER III

# CHRIST

OUR first task will be to investigate the difficulties inherent in the ecclesiastical and the biblical presentations of Christ. Defenders of Christianity have been wont to gloss over these difficulties, appealing to the religious values felt to be contained in the presentations. But this procedure is inadmissible to us who are seeking for the truth. A little reflection will make it appear likely that there are erroneous elements in the ancient conception of Christ ; for the beliefs and dogmas of Christianity were affected by the immaturity of the science of the ages in which they came into being. Increasing knowledge of Nature has compelled educated Christians to take a view of the Creation widely different from that commonly held in the days of the Apostles and the ecumenical councils ; and it is compelling them to revise their beliefs as to the end of the world and as to Heaven and Hell ; while psychology and literary criticism are forcing on them new conceptions of inspiration and the truth of the Scriptures. These considerations should prepare us to acknowledge need for modification in the ancient doctrine and view of Christ, if this should conflict with modern science and philosophy. Or is it to be maintained that the creation of the World and man in six days, the accuracy of the early record in the Hebrew Scriptures of the history of mankind and the Israelites, the imminent abolition of the Earth in fire, the golden pavement of Heaven, and the flaming brimstone of Hell, are unimportant for religion ; but that Christ, as represented by the New Testament writers and the Church councils, is of very great importance, so that the former may be disbelieved, whereas any radical reconstruction of the idea of Christ is inadmissible? But surely neither are the creation of the World and man, the Divine revelation to the Israelites, the end of the world, and the issues of righteousness and sin unimportant for religion ; only, their significance may be conserved with the radical reconstruction of our ideas about them necessitated by the improving knowledge and intelligence of mankind. May it not be likewise that the main values formerly attributed to Christ are compatible with considerable changes in the conception of Christ? It should be our endeavour to bear in mind these values, and not to let our reconstruction of belief impair them. We will begin with raising objections to the ecclesiastical and the biblical presentations of Christ. Subsequently we will consider the religious values of Christ.

The dogma of the Holy Trinity as it took shape at the end of the doctrinal development of the early centuries of Christianity may be briefly stated as follows : God is one ; but there are three Persons in God—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost ; each of these is God, though they unite to form but one God. According to the dogma of the Incarnation, the second of the Divine Persons, the Son, was born as a man—namely, Jesus of Nazareth, known as Christ. In Jesus

Christ there were (and, indeed, still are) two natures (including wills)—a Divine and a human, each remaining distinct though united, but only one person—namely, the Divine Person of God the Son. It was confessed that the precise relations of the Persons of the Godhead and of the two natures were incomprehensible. But these dogmatic formulæ, it was maintained, were required to safeguard the truth from such misconceptions as arose from unorthodox speculation. To quote Augustine: "Dictum est tamen, Tres Personæ, non ut illud diceretur, sed ne taceretur."

The precise connotation of the word *persona* in the dogma of the Trinity is not easy to grasp. It certainly did not mean "person" in the modern sense—namely, self or indivisible centre of consciousness. The word was adopted by the Latin Fathers as a translation, though an inadequate one, of *ὑπόστασις*, which may be roughly interpreted as "distinct mode of existence."[1]

But while the word *persona* in the creeds is by no means equivalent to the modern sense of "person," nevertheless the doctrine of the Trinity, taken in connection with that of the Incarnation and with the biblical narrative and theology, resulted in the three Persons of the Godhead, in particular, the First and the Second, being regarded as individual centres of conscious life. For Jesus is depicted as a person in the same sense as any man. And, since "Jesus" is identical, according to ecclesiastical orthodoxy, with "God the Son"—an identification which is favoured by the belief that Jesus, after His earthly career, is said to have ascended into Heaven, where He dwells, and from whence He will come to judge mankind—God the Son must be a person. Or we may look at the matter thus: Jesus is Christ; Christ lives in Heaven, at the same time assisting men in their endeavours after salvation; and Christ also existed in Heaven previously to His life on earth, being the eternal Word of God, the Agent in creation and revelation; and the Word of God is God the Son, who is equal to God the Father. Consequently, however much theologians might deny that *persona* is equivalent to "person," dogma and the Scriptures and, we may add, piety obliged the mind to think of the Second Person of the Holy Trinity as a person or self. That God the Father was thought of as a person was due to religious instinct and the language of the Bible. The Third Person was less definitely conceived. But the account in the Bible of the appearance of the Holy Ghost in bodily shape, the personificatory tendency of the human mind unused to abstract ideas, and the natural wish to bring the Third Person into line with the First and the Second, resulted in the Holy Ghost also being, popularly at least, regarded as an individual conscious Being. Champions of the ancient dogmatic formulæ may have insisted that *persona* does not mean "person," that, indeed, the unity between the Persons of the Godhead is of another order than that which could exist between human persons. Nevertheless, they have commonly regarded God the Son as personally identical with Jesus in the modern sense of "personal," so that although "Person" in the dogma may be other than or more than "person," God the Son has been, in fact, conceived of as a person, and God as consisting of three persons. Now criticism of the conception of the dogma of the Holy Trinity as signifying that God consists of three persons (in the modern sense), of whom Jesus Christ was one, is called for by the fact that this view of God and Christ appears to some degree involved in the ecclesiastical dogma taken in connection with the biblical narrative and presentation of Jesus Christ.

---

[1] Augustine, "De Trinitate," v. 10: "Sed quia nostra loquendi consuetudo jam obtinuit, ut hoc intelligatur cum dicimus essentiam (*οὐσία*) quod intelligitur cum dicimus substantiam (*ὑπόστασις*), non audemus dicere unam essentiam, tres substantias, sed unam essentiam vel substantiam, tres autem personas: quemadmodum multi Latini ista tractantes et digni auctoritate dixerunt, cum alium modum aptiorem non invenirent quo enuntiarent quod sine verbis intelligerent."

The word *persona* corresponded to *πρόσωπον*, but *ὑπόστασις* was substituted because the former word was liable to be used in the interests of Sabellianism. John of Damascus, Dialogues, 43: *Χρὴ δὲ γινώσκειν ὡς οἱ ἅγιοι πατέρες ὑπόστασιν καὶ πρόσωπον τὸ αὐτὸ ἐκάλεσαν.*

Later a Person of the Trinity was defined as the Divine substance with a particular personal property, "essentia divina cum proprietatibus personalibus." In the First Person the personal property is paternity, in the Second filiation, in the Third procession. According to this the Second Person of the Holy Trinity is the Divine essence in so far as characterised by the attribute "begotten." *Vide* E. A. Litton, "Introduction to Dogmatic Theology," 2nd ed., p. 104.

To the dogma of the Divinity of Christ, interpreted in the sense that Jesus of Nazareth is personally identical with a Being equal to the Creator and unique, there are three classes of objections :—

1. The Person of the Godhead who became incarnate in man, if He is to take rank along with the primary Creator of the World, cannot be an otiose member of the Godhead, but must—so at least we should think—have some important function in the making or government of the World. To suppose otherwise would be to make Him an insignificant being that merely co-existed with God Himself, until the time came for Him to take human form.

And in the New Testament this requirement is in certain passages fully met. In the Gospel according to St. John, Christ is identified with the Λόγος of God, the Word who is co-eternal with God and is Himself God and the Agent in all creation. And St. Paul says that in the Son were all things created, and through Him and unto Him; and in Him all things hold together.

But if this Divine Being is to become incarnate in man, it would seem that He must temporarily at least renounce much of His powers, that He may think by means of a human mind, and act with a human will. And so St. Paul says that Christ, being in the form of God, thought it not a prize to be equal with God, but emptied Himself and took the form of a servant of God—namely, the human form.[1] And the record of the life of Jesus is of one with limited powers and limited knowledge, who grew from infancy to maturity in the natural human fashion.

Were, then, the functions of the eternal Son of God left unperformed during the period of His incarnation? Was the Holy Trinity impaired by the self-limitation of one of its members? Surely not. The Son of God during His incarnation must still have been immanent in the whole World, as before and after, fashioning and controlling and illuminating. Athanasius writes on this subject as follows:—

"Even while He was in His human body, and Himself was quickening it, He without inconsistency gave life to the Universe and was in everything, although His being lay outside the Universe. . . . The Word of God was not bound to His body, but rather had the mastery of it, so as to have His being in it and His existence in everything ; He had His being outside things, and in His Father alone He rested ; and this was the marvel, that as man He went about on earth, as Word He quickened everything, as Son He dwelt with the Father." [1]

---

[1] For exegesis of this passage *vide* p. 152.

But how could a person be at once omniscient and have limited human knowledge, be at once omnipotent and have limited human power, at once govern the whole World and have His energies concentrated on a particular mission belonging to Him as man? To know all and to know little, to have all power and to have little power, to be ruling the World and to bend one's whole self to the accomplishment of a certain task in the World—these cannot be predicated of the same person in reference to the same time. If it be true that God the Son was and did all this together, then we must conclude that personality as applied to Him cannot mean indivisible centre of consciousness.

2. So long as the Earth was thought to be the centre of the Universe, and the stars to have been created mainly to illuminate it, it might seem not unreasonable to believe that there was only one Son of God, and that He took human form and lived a human life, in order to meet certain pressing needs of mankind. But the progress of astronomy, revealing the extent and character of the Universe, has made this appear in a high degree improbable. For the fixed stars we now know to be bodies such as the Sun, some bigger, some smaller. And we may suppose that the laws according to which the solar system was formed operated also among these distant suns, so that round them too planets circle. Of this the periodic partial occultation

---

[1] "De Incarnatione," xvii.

of a few stars is evidence. And, to judge from the analogy of our world, it is probable that many of the planets of the stars are inhabited by races of intelligent and moral beings. And if the process of the development of these beings be like that which has occurred with us, on a number of globes a Divine Saviour will be required. Either, then, Jesus must have become incarnate or will be incarnate several times, or there must be several Beings of like kind to Jesus. As to the former, it may be said that the whole tenor of the biblical narrative and presentation of Jesus is against this: He came from Heaven, suffered once for all, and returned to Heaven to remain in glory until He comes at the end of the world. Besides, if the number of globes with nearly simultaneously developing races be very great—as from the number of visible stars appears likely—a simultaneous presence of the Saviour on several globes would be necessitated. Or can we conceive that Jesus Christ while living on this globe was also living on others in the same sense? But this either would involve an extreme docetism, the appearance of Christ as conscious and acting through only the one body that was on the Earth being under the supposition illusory; or would imply a disintegration of the Son of God into a number of independent consciousnesses, in which case it becomes very difficult to believe in the personality, in the modern sense, of the unique Son of God. We seem driven to the second horn of the dilemma—that there are indeed several beings of a like kind to Jesus. But this is inadmissible on the dogma that there is but one God the Son, and He is personally identical with the Saviour of the human race on this planet.

But can we be sure that the inhabitants of other globes need redemption, or the same kind of redeemer as the human race? To this it seems sufficient to answer that we have absolutely no reason for supposing the human race to be unique in this respect ; we may, indeed, expect differences in detail between the intelligent beings on each globe, but have no right to postulate so fundamental a difference as this would imply. But further, the transition from instinctive action in accordance with bodily impulse to the self-determination of rational consciousness seems probably, if not certainly, to involve a stage in which rational will is subservient to bodily impulses instead of controlling them—in other words, a stage of sin. It may be added that it has been commonly held among theologians of repute that even if the fall had not taken place, the Incarnation would still have been required in order that man might attain that spiritual nature and spiritual union with God to which he is destined.

Oh, but—it may be replied—the existence of intelligent beings elsewhere in the Universe is so uncertain that we cannot legitimately jeopardise a fundamental article of our creed on that account. Who can tell whether the whole of the material creation does not exist only to give favourable conditions for life on this globe? May not this Earth be the kernel of the Universe—surely on account of the life it supports not unworthy of so tremendous and glorious a shell? Let two replies be given. First, the idea that these many globes should be unoccupied gives the sense of wastefulness in the Divine economy and conflicts with the belief in the wisdom of the Creator. Secondly, the idea that God could save the inhabitants of but one globe at a time, having, so to say, only one instrument for that purpose, is also obnoxious to our religious sense. Rather, if this were known to be the sole inhabited globe among the stars, even so we should prefer to think that the Divine methods of redeeming and perfecting the human race are such that they could equally well be applied to an indefinite number of races at the same time. To imply that the Divine power to save is, like some human faculties, capable of being used in one direction only at a time, is surely to derogate from its spirituality; it is to think of God as narrowly confined by local and temporal conditions.[1]

---

[1] R. A. Proctor, in "Other Worlds from Ours," has these passages:—

1. "That at some time or other these worlds have been or will be the abode of intelligent creatures seems to be a conclusion very fairly deducible from what we know of their probable structure" (p. 234).

2. "To sum up what we have learned so far from the study of the starry heavens, we see that, besides our sun, there are myriads of other suns in the immensity of space; that these suns are large and massive bodies, capable of swaying by their attraction systems of worlds as important as those which circle round the sun; that these suns are formed of elements similar in construction to those which circle round them, and may be regarded as in all probability similar in construction to this earth, and that from these suns all the forms of force which we know to be necessary to the existence of organized beings on our earth are abundantly emitted. It seems reasonable to conclude that these suns are girt round by dependent systems of worlds. Though we cannot, as in the case of the solar system, actually see such worlds, yet the mind presents them before us, various in size, various in structure, infinitely various in their physical condition and habitudes" (p. 238).

This conclusion, however, has not been unopposed. Dr. Alfred Russel Wallace, in his book, "Man's Place in the Cosmos," has argued that a unique combination of circumstances was necessary for the evolution of man, that the chances are many millions to one against this combination occurring among the number of stars of whose existence we have become aware by means of the telescope, that it is probable on several grounds that the Universe does not extend far

And yet this argument is not cogent by itself, for it rests on the assumption that the solar systems which have become known to us through the telescope, or some of them other than our own, are dependent upon the same personal creative Spirit on whom the Earth depends. If each solar system depends on a personally distinct Spirit, then, so far as this argument goes,

beyond the most distant of the visible stars, and that the position of our sun, namely, somewhere near the centre of the galactic plane and in the middle of a thick cluster of stars, indicates that it occupies a nearly unique position in the Universe, a position, therefore, probably integral to the combination of circumstances above mentioned. He enforces this argument in detail. Among the circumstances required for the production and development of organism and, in particular, of its development into a race of beings equal to man in intelligence must be reckoned the following: an atmosphere composed of suitable gases, a distribution of water on the surface of a globe such as to allow a fair space of dry land and sufficient surface of sea to supply vapours of rain, an axis and speed of rotation such as are required for day and night and for summer and winter, a distribution of mountains such as to condition winds favourable to climate, and there are many others less obvious. Dr. Alfred Russel Wallace writes:—

“The actual degree of improbability of each of these conditions cannot be determined except vaguely, but any one who will carefully consider and weigh my very imperfect exposition of them will, I think, admit that they are usually very considerable, the chances against each of them being in some cases perhaps ten to one, in others ten thousand to one or even more. But if we take the whole of the simultaneous conditions requisite as only fifty in number, and the chances of each occurring simultaneously with the rest to be only ten to one, an estimate which seems to me absurdly low because many of them are quantitative within narrow limits, then, the chances against the simultaneous occurrence of the whole fifty would be a million raised to the eighth power $(1,000,000)^8$ or a million multiplied eight times successively to 1” (2nd ed., p. 327).

To reply, the argument from the uniqueness of the position of the Earth would at most only show that life is likely to prosper more on a planet of a star belonging to the central cluster, of which there are several thousand.

To the argument that the conditions of organic life and, in particular, organic life developing into rational life depend upon so long a series

Jesus may have been the only Son of God, if we mean by "God" the Creator of the Earth and, perhaps, of all this solar system. But what right have we to the assumption that there is one personal Creator of all the known suns and their planets? Can we argue that the fact that these stars interact physically—

of such minute chances, that it is very improbable that they would occur in the comparatively small number of worlds in the known stellar Universe, we may reply that if the total chance against the conditions recurring together in any given case is, as stated, at least 1,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000 to 1, the marvel is that they should have occurred together at all in so small a number of worlds. But if these conditions are the result of purposive forces, as the above computation of chances seems to indicate, we have reason to think that the same purposive force has operated in other worlds also for the production of the conditions of life.

It is not necessary to suppose a very close similarity of conditions. We may for the purposes of illustration conceive of a small savage tribe dwelling in isolation on an island in the Pacific Ocean. Living in a mild and equable climate, with abundance of food from uncultivated fruit-trees, and fish easily captured in lagoons, the very different material conditions prevailing in the other quarters of the globe might seem to these people, if they learn about them, to preclude human life altogether. Could they understand that the fruit they ate depended on a particular composition of the soil that was unlikely to be found anywhere else, and the fish they captured were incapable of living in fresh water or in cold seas, and that the situation of the island at a particular latitude in the middle of the ocean was essential to the maintenance of a temperature of the air suitable to the human body, they might with some show of reason infer that here, and here alone, is human life. And this conclusion would be strengthened if they could come to know of the great heat from the Sun near the equator in the interior of continents, the bitter cold of the northern and southern regions, and the annual variations of temperature occurring in the intermediate zones. And yet they would be wrong. In like manner may those be wrong who, on even more meagre facts, confidently affirm that the Earth is probably the only living spot among a thousand million stars. It is fair, however, to remark that the force of this illustration is slightly, but, I think, only slightly, weakened by the fact that human life did not perhaps begin amid the more difficult conditions.

through light and gravitation—implies this? Or must we not confess that we have little ground for deciding either way? Let us be humble enough to admit the limits of our knowledge and probable opinion. But, in any case, it seems that the received conception of the personality of the members of the Holy Trinity cannot be maintained exactly.

3. What bearing have the historical records of Jesus of Nazareth on the identification of Him with a personal Being equal in greatness to the Creator, who had existed from all eternity together with Him? The attempt to recover the historical Jesus, discerning between genuine sayings and events and later accretions to the tradition, is one of very great difficulty. But with reference to the present question the evidence is hardly doubtful.

The notion that Jesus was a Being equal in greatness to the Creator, who for the time had become man, is not disproved by the fact that His knowledge was limited during His earthly life, since omniscience seems incompatible with being a man. But ignorance of such a kind as that of the end of the world or age seems unlikely in such a Being. Moreover, Jesus speaks as if this ignorance were not due merely to His present condition, but belonged to all except God the Father (Mark xiii. 32). And He does not seem always to have ready to hand knowledge requisite for the performance of His daily work. For instance, it would appear that He changed His mind with regard to the woman of Canaan (Matthew xv. 21–3), and in the agony in the Garden of Gethsemane He shows uncertainty as to whether the cup of suffering then presented was to be drunk by Him.

The temptations in the wilderness have been much discussed. But perhaps the following interpretation is near the truth. Jesus had for some time been coming to the conviction that He was the Saviour promised to the Israelites. But He was still beset with doubts. First: Surely the Son of God would have power to assuage His own hunger by a miracle. If He tried to turn stones into bread for this purpose and failed, that would, presumably, indicate that He was not the Christ. Secondly: God would certainly not allow the Saviour to perish before the accomplishment of His work, wherefore He might safely throw Himself from a height. The third temptation arose, perhaps, out of the common expectation of a militant Messiah who would win an earthly empire. Jesus sees the temptation to offer Himself to His countrymen in that character as a temptation of worldly ambition. To do this would be in effect a worshipping of the evil being which dominated mankind, namely, the desire of honour and possessions.

In this connection we should notice indications of severe inward struggle in the energetic repulse of Peter's suggestion that He should avoid His death (Mark viii. 33), and in the agony in Gethsemane when He speaks of His own will or wish as not then at one with His Father's, but needing to be brought into subjection thereto.

Jesus most commonly addresses and speaks of the Creator as Father, but also as God; but to God the Son God the Father would surely always be Father, not God. In one place He even seems to class Himself among men in distinction from God: "He answered, It is written, Thou shalt not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."

Then there are these two sayings to be taken into account (*a*) "Why callest thou me good? None is good, save one, that is God"; (*b*) "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?"

(*a*) When addressed as "Good Master," Jesus takes the opportunity of calling attention to the imperfection of all human goodness and the solitary perfection of God. In doing this He incidentally classes His own goodness as among the imperfect kind. The suggestion that Jesus meant to imply that, since He is good and God only is good, therefore He is God, is not to be tolerated. We must take the words in the sense they were likely to convey to him to whom they were addressed, not in a sense which might be drawn from them by theologians in subsequent times. We are not, indeed, obliged to think that Jesus here shows consciousness of sin, in the sense of serious transgression of Divine command. Rather we might think that He felt that He had not attained complete inward harmony and peace (σωφροσύνη as opposed to ἐγκράτεια, in Aristotelian language), being still afflicted with temptations. (*b*) Did Jesus expect to be miraculously rescued from the cross, and was He disappointed in His last hour? Perhaps a more acceptable explanation of the cry would be that the sense of the Divine presence which had hitherto sustained Him had ceased. We may suppose that the sense of God's presence and loving aid which some have attained in moments of religious ecstasy was to Jesus relatively constant. Probably He felt the Divine support and encouragement as an answer to His prayer in Gethsemane, and thereby He was enabled to face death by crucifixion with equanimity and endure the pain and horror of the last few hours. But when the mind of Jesus, through weariness and weakness, relaxed the intense contemplation of God, for the moment He lost the sense of the Divine presence. Shall we say, then, that Jesus, mistaking the momentary failure to feel God for God's withdrawal of His presence, gave vent to a bitter cry, not of despair, indeed, so much as of questioning? But if He had felt certain of being presently restored to the Divine bliss which He had before enjoyed, surely there would not have been uttered that cry.

Is there anything in the first three gospels which points to the identification of Jesus with such a Being as theology figured under the name, "the Second Person of the Trinity"? The Son of God is probably a title for the Messiah, as we may infer from the High Priest's question at the trial. One saying has been used to support this Christology: "All things are delivered to me of my Father, and no man knoweth what the Son is, but the Father, and what the Father is, but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal Him." But reasons have appeared for doubting its genuineness.[1] And on account of its close connection with a thanksgiving to God for having made revelations to babes rather than to the learned, it may be held to signify that Jesus is the one and only mediator of the revelation to mankind of the inmost nature of God, and is as yet known only by God to be such.[2]

To sum up—the general impression afforded by the record in the first three gospels is that Jesus only by degrees and with much mental conflict came to believe Himself to be the Messiah, and that His conception of the office was largely determined by the prevalent Jewish theology, though He gave it a far higher moral and religious interpretation than was current, in accordance with and even surpassing the highest prophetic religion. To the end He seems to have been in doubt as to how He was destined to fulfil His mission. And He seems never to have quite discarded the belief that the Messiah must shortly reappear in bodily presence, to judge mankind and establish the Kingdom of God. Probably, indeed, He had always a suspicion that such theological ideas were largely symbolic, though to what extent He was unable to be quite certain. We discern in Jesus one who felt Himself called to be a great redeemer of mankind in accordance with ancient prophecy, who had profound and true moral and religious insight, but who all the while was learning and groping amid the theology of His age and race—in fact, a man with intense God-consciousness, yet a seeker after truth.

---

[1] *Vide* A. Loisy, "L'Evangile et l'Eglise," Section iii., chap. 1.

[2] *Vide* Wendt, "The Teaching of Jesus," *ad loc.*

What, then, of the teaching of Jesus concerning Himself recorded in the Fourth Gospel? Let it suffice to say here: first, that the form of the discourses in this gospel, it is practically certain, is due largely to the evangelist or to those through whom the tradition passed (in this there is a general agreement among scholars); secondly, the teaching has been found susceptible of an interpretation which does not imply the personal identification of Jesus with such a being as figured in later dogmatics as God the Son, and, indeed, in places is in contradiction with it.[1]

---

[1] *Vide* Wendt, "The Teaching of Jesus," and Beyschlag, "New Testament Theology."

We may add here that the earliest apostolic Christology, at least as it appears in the Acts of the Apostles, is of a very primitive order. Jesus is a man approved of God (ii. 22), raised up by God (ii. 32), made by God to be Lord and Christ (ii. 36), and a servant of God (iii. 13, 26; iv. 27, 30). Even the title "Son of God" does not occur till it is used by St. Paul, and then, perhaps, in the sense of Messiah (ix. 20). Jesus is the Lord, a title which is justified by Psalm cx., in which it is applied both to Jahwe and to the King in juxtaposition, so that no doctrine of community of nature can be inferred from the early use of this title. A like attitude towards the person of Jesus is to be found in the Epistle of St. James.

Such, then, are our main lines of argument against the traditional Christology—the argument from theology, the argument from astronomy, the argument from the historical record. Metaphysics, and science, and history concur in demanding a revision of the idea of Christ which has been handed down to us.

But after all, should we, with our limited experience and intellectual capacity, repose much confidence in such objections? We have experience of the mutual relations of personality and spirit only in the beginnings of spiritual life in man. Shall we, then, presume to define the possibilities of personality in the spiritual Being or Beings upon whom we believe the World to depend? Our equipment for such an undertaking may appear ludicrously inadequate.

But perhaps the most powerful reason for the dissent of the modern philosophic mind from the view of Christ which we have been criticising is more general than these arguments. It is briefly this: The World, so far as we know it, has come to be and exists through orderly processes. Everywhere and at every time there is the regular operation of forces. New forces spring into existence—emerge, as we have learned to think, from another order of being; but they arise according to their own power to push themselves forward. The whole movement of the World resembles the continuous change and evolution of organic life, rather than the sudden and definite actions of human beings on their environment. The general aspect of things is so contrary to an anthropomorphic, and so consonant with an organic conception of God and creation, that the suggestion that in the midst of the cosmic evolution there became incarnate a being equal to the creative Spirit of all, or, rather, one of two or three equal creative Spirits, gives offence to the modern philosophic mind. To take an analogy, the importation of some figure into a picture might conflict with the general æsthetic significance of the picture, though the artistic offence might be hard to prove intellectually. So may the impossibility or even the improbability of this doctrine be hard to prove, but it conflicts with the general appearance of the World and the World-process.

It may, indeed, be argued against this that the creation and evolution of organism might be expected to resemble the ordinary behaviour of organism, but that the highest forms of reality would be Divinely produced in the World in a manner more resembling the action of human beings. The production of organism would naturally proceed organically; the production of human life would naturally proceed in human or anthropomorphic fashion. But the facts do not bear this theory out to the extent demanded by the hypothesis of the incarnation of God the Son. By what gradual and painful stages has the human race got knowledge and wisdom! How have partial aspects of the truth from time to time dominated nations and civilizations and churches, till their inadequacy has been proved through bitter experience and disaster! All this indicates that even in things of the soul God gives through emanation and growth, and if through special actions, even so along the ordinary channels of communication. Whether, then, there be one or two or three creative Spirits of the World, the idea that one should take individual human form is incredible.

And we may feel assured of the validity of our objection through considering the character of early human thought and the manner of the growth of this doctrine. In old times forces of Nature were conceived of as conscious beings, and the dealings of the Gods with men were likened to the dealings of men with one another. In the Hebrew religion the Creator of the World was believed to have actually walked in bodily shape in a garden. It is therefore no matter for wonder that in an age when the human intellect had not yet discarded its mythology and anthropomorphism the idea of the union of God with man and the participation of man in the Divine nature was represented as the incarnation of a Son of God equal to God Himself. And we can trace the process by which, through the influence of Jewish theology and Greek metaphysics, the man whose mission it was to preach the Kingdom of God and who in his own personality and life symbolised the union of God with man and the attainment by man of the Divine nature, became known at last as God the Son. In view, then, of its evident mode of origin, we need not hesitate to set aside this doctrine which so offends our science and philosophy, that we may attempt a more adequate presentation of the reality which it obscurely shadowed forth.

The doctrines of the Incarnation and the Holy Trinity were the outcome of the union of the noblest religion that had hitherto arisen in mankind with the later stages of perhaps the greatest development of thought that had been till then. We, living in the epoch of civilization succeeding that in which this took place, must respect these doctrines. But that does not exempt them from criticism. And if in any regard they seem to lead to false conclusions, it is incumbent on us to rethink the same problems, endeavouring to realise the facts of religion which inspired patristic theology, and to appreciate the ancient forms of thought, that no grain of truth be lost. So shall we preserve the elements of value in ecclesiastical dogma, coming to consider it perhaps as a system of symbolic ideas which safeguarded Christian truth until clearer conceptions became possible.

But why, we may ask, did Christian truth need safeguarding? For the original inspiration was convincing and afforded religious satisfaction. Why should dogma be a necessity for the fourth century, if the first century could attain salvation and peace without it? The answer surely is that the communion of the soul with the Divine had lost its early intensity. Men lived religion less and thought about it more. Now, if they thought falsely about it, the intellect being in the ascendant and religion having lost much of its vitality, erroneous ideas about the relation of God and the soul might weaken or even destroy the religion. It was therefore needful that those in whom religion was still vigorous should frame an intellectual system of the presuppositions of religion which should be favourable to the immature or languishing religion in the others, and ward off ideas which threatened to harm it. But we may also think of theology as promoting the growth of intellect, and so assisting towards the complete development of humanity.

But if we reject this doctrine of Christ, what other may we adopt? Shall we think of Him as a great superhuman Being, who exercises a mighty influence over mankind, hearing and fulfilling prayers, inspiring and strengthening souls, and who will one day appear in visible form before human eyes to inaugurate the Kingdom of Heaven?

But this conception of Christ is closely connected with an expectation of a cataclysm of Nature which, to the modern mind, contemplating the orderly processes of evolution, savours of the mythological. But more than this, the return of Jesus as King and Judge in this fashion was predicted to take place within the lifetime of the generation in which He lived in the flesh (Mark xiii. 30 ; cp. ix., and Matthew x. 23). Were it not better, then, to discard these supernatural elements from our Christology?

Or was He the ideal human being, the perfect man, and as such the revelation of God? But it is hardly to be denied that He shared with His contemporaries views concerning the World and its destiny which science and the course of events have shown to be false. Such vast scientific and industrial and political progress of man as has since taken place was probably not imagined by Him. How can we take as the perfect image of the Creator one whose ideas concerning the Universe and the future of mankind were so imperfect?

Or does He represent God and the ideal for mankind through being morally perfect? But, in the first place, is it probable that one who appeared so early in the course of the evolution of humanity realised to perfection the ideal of the moral character of man? And if He had, how could we know that He had till we have seen the term of human growth? And, in the second place, since a human character is composed of numerous elements—namely, habits of emotional and volitional reaction to diverse kinds of stimuli—we must doubt whether these were all complete in Him. But, indeed, can we be sure that there is only one perfect type of character? May it not be, as with flowers, that there are many human types, each perfect in itself?

But if we look to the ethical teaching of Jesus, we are again confronted with difficulties. What precisely is meant by not resisting evil, giving to all that ask, and lending freely of one's possessions? Or, again, how can we give up all thought for food and raiment, and live as birds and flowers, in trust that God will provide for all our needs? Would not this at once condemn the whole vast structure and machinery of modern industry, whereby the necessities and comforts of human life are produced? Surely man is educated through having to provide for his own needs by means of persistent and intelligent labour.

Granted, then, that Jesus was the greatest and most God-inspired man that has yet lived, it does not follow from that, it may be argued, that he will for all time be the pattern to mankind and the revealer of God. Others in due course will arise who will surpass him, as the powers of humanity grow. From him, doubtless, has sprung the noblest religion that has yet appeared on the face of the earth. But the teaching of Jesus will be superseded as the lesson-books of childhood.

So it may seem that, with the surrender of the Athanasian doctrine of Christ, the claim of Christianity to be the final religion must presently collapse. We may have thought, indeed, that by giving up the dogma that Jesus is God we made our religion more credible and secure. We may have rejoiced at having won a saner and humaner creed. But perhaps only for a while does our satisfaction last. To take away the Divinity of Christ is to place him altogether in the process of human growth, and therefore to make him imperfect, and, indeed, the more strikingly imperfect as fresh reaches of the evolution of man open out.

And yet need we regret this? May we not assure ourselves that higher and greater ideals will be Divinely revealed as we become capable of apprehending them? Nor shall we have to regard Christianity as false except in its claim to finality. It must anyhow convey certain shreds of the truth concerning God and humanity symbolically and mixed with error, thus preparing for more extensive and direct apprehension of the truth.

Nevertheless, we cannot thus lightly set aside all that theology by which it has been thought to prove that the Divine is in three forms and that in one of these forms man participates. Nor can we ignore the deep and intense yearning of the religious nature towards the Divine Man, as at once the lover and the ideal of human souls. It would seem that somehow in the idea of perfect union of Divine nature and human nature Christianity has given mankind an element of the perfect religion. We seem, then, to be in an impasse.

But there is a way out, and it is this. What mankind really worships under the figure of Christ, it may be said, is the ideal of humanity. The character of the conception is derived partly from the portrait of Jesus in the gospels, but partly also from the imagination of souls in their yearning for perfection. Christ is the Divine humanity, which is the goal of the progress of both individual and race.

That call for Jesus, gentle and patient and pitiful, Jesus who is love stronger than death and hell—what is it but the voice of the new human life, the life that shall supersede all manliness and womanliness, the life that is struggling to its birth and shall grow and be mighty? Christ is mankind's image of its own ideal, being a reflection of what lies in the mysterious profundities of itself. To the ideal that shall be realised do the doctrines of the Church truly apply. The coming humanity dies in agony and rises to life unfettered by the bonds of mortal flesh. He is the sinless One, He is the only-begotten of the Eternal, He is the very image and of the very essence of God.

Now such an interpretation of Christ, if not the whole truth, must be part of the truth. Men's interest in Christ arises from the belief that they will attain to Divine life because of Him. The doctrine of Christ does respond to deep longings in human nature for escape from earthly limitations and for purity and glory and ineffable love, longings which may be the early symptoms of the stirrings of a greater life.

But the consciousness underlying the doctrine of Christ is not merely the longing for Divine life, but also the sense of attainment of Divine life, though yet in embryo. To know what Christ is, we must take into account the fact that Christians are wont to feel saved from sin and endowed with new life by Divine power in virtue of religion determined by acquaintance with the teaching and character and career of Jesus. What must Jesus have been and what must be His relation to the ideal humanity, according to the religious experience of Christians?

Our inquiry will proceed along two main lines. We will first trace the rise and growth of the doctrine of Christ, with the view to discovering what were the factors which produced it. We will then consider the religious experience of Christianity, that we may find what it implies as to the nature of Christ.

How did the doctrine of Christ come into existence? Let us begin by thinking of what Jesus actually taught. The main burden of His message seems to have been that the Kingdom of God was at hand and that men must prepare for it. And this preparation consisted in a certain moral and religious behaviour and character. Men must be merciful, generous, and forgiving. They must do good to and love even their enemies. They must not retaliate either in word or deed, or pass judgment on others. They must not trouble about bodily goods, such as food and clothes. They must long and strive for righteousness. They must be sincere and modest in religion. They must be humble and patient. They must pray to and trust and love God. Some receive a special call to prepare for the Kingdom of God—namely, by preaching and, seemingly, by healing the sick and demoniac; and these must, if the work require it, give up possessions and kindred and face persecution and death. For the majority in all this there is no demand for allegiance to Jesus Himself. Love to God and love to their fellows comprise all that is needed to fit men for the Kingdom of God. Certain, however, were, as remarked, specially called to preach the Gospel; and this naturally involved discipleship to Jesus, as the Prophet of the Kingdom of God. He also called on people to pay heed to Him for their own salvation, seeing that He was the messenger of the saving truth. But salvation depended, on the man's side, entirely on the conduct and religion in which the man had to do with God and with other men. There is no Christology here.[1]

Such was the manner, according to Jesus, in which men must prepare for the Kingdom of God. There was, however, a different subject in His teaching—namely, the actual coming of the Kingdom of God. And it is in relation to this that Christology begins.

The eschatology in the Synoptic Gospels presents difficult questions. It savours strongly of the mythology of Jewish apocalyptic writers and conflicts with the ethical tone of the rest of the teaching of Jesus, so as to make us hesitate to ascribe it all to Him. But there can be little doubt that Jesus did prophesy the coming of the Kingdom of Heaven ere a generation had passed, whatever He may have understood by it. Now, according to tradition, the inaugurator of the Kingdom of Heaven would be a Divine being from Jahwe, called the Messiah and the Son of God. It appears that Jesus substantially accepted this tradition and identified Himself with the Messiah. As evidence that Jesus did hold Himself to be the Messiah we may notice the following: the temptations in the wilderness, which arise out of that belief; the practical acceptance of the title of "Christ" from Peter at Cæsarea; the frequent use of the term "Son of Man" to signify Himself, which was a name for the Messiah;[1] the avowal at the trial before the Sanhedrin that He was the Christ, with the prediction that He would come on the clouds of Heaven. On the other hand, the records of the scene at Cæsarea and the trial show that Jesus made no public announcement of His office.

---

[1] Cp. Professor G. B. Foster, "The Finality of the Christian Religion," p. 393, where he transcribes largely from Professor Wernle's "Die Quellen des Lebens Jesu": "For all authors and compilers of the evangelical writings since the earliest time, *faith in Jesus the Messiah* is the primary thing which separates Christian and non-Christian—the fundamental presupposition for all the conclusions that follow. But they have first carried this back into the words of Jesus. In the words of Jesus, the main thing is *confidence in God, purity of heart, mercifulness, humility, placability, yearning—this and nothing else besides.* This is God's will, as is set forth in the Sermon on the Mount. Who does it is Jesus's mother, and sister, and brother."

Jesus declared Himself to be the Messiah: that is the commencement of Christology. The question then arises as to what He understood by this title. Did He think of Himself as having previously existed with God and as the destined King of a restored Israel? According to the record, He would judge mankind in heavenly state: "When the Son of Man shall come in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then shall He sit on the throne of His glory: and before Him shall be gathered all the nations: and He shall separate them one from another, as the shepherd separateth the sheep from the goats." Did He really say this? And if so, did He mean it literally? Or is it a later addition derived from Jewish apocalyptists? Or did He maintain a secret reserve as to the exactitude of the traditional imagery of the end of the world? Anyhow, there it stands in the gospel. The main divergence from the customary view of the coming of the Messiah was the declaration that He must first be put to death (for this there was some warrant in Hebrew prophecy, notably in Isaiah liii.); but He would rise from death and, ascending to Heaven, return as the Christ. Jesus, then, is a supernatural being, who amid portents will inaugurate the Kingdom of God.

---

[1] *Vide* Daniel vii. 13.

Let us pause to ask ourselves whether and how far this doctrine of Christ in the Synoptic Gospels is true. Now there are five considerations for rejecting it. Firstly, it does not belong to the distinctive and original teaching of Jesus, but was derived from the imaginative speculations of an uncritical class of writers. Secondly, the conception of the coming of the Kingdom of God in which this doctrine finds its place is contrary to the general character of cosmic processes so far as science has revealed them. Thirdly, the Kingdom of God, being a condition of life in which men are inwardly related to God, is produced through certain moral and religious behaviour and the response of God thereto, political changes being subsidiary, and therefore not through the establishment of any world-state accompanied with miracles such as would require the Christ of Jewish eschatology. Fourthly, miracles such as would require the Christ of Jewish eschatology would at most be subsidiary. Jesus through His teaching and actions and career fulfilled entirely the work of the Christ in that He provided the conditions of the Kingdom of God conceived as a state of vital relation of humanity to God, so that there is now no reason for expecting Him to return in order to establish the Kingdom of God. Fifthly, the eschatology to which this doctrine of Christ belongs has been disproved by the course of events: Jesus was to return as the Christ upon the clouds of Heaven with angels to judge mankind, before the then living generations had passed away (Matthew x. 23; Mark ix. 1, xiii. 30); but it did not happen.

There is also, however, the question as to how Jesus regarded His death. According to one passage He declared—by way of an example indeed—that the Son of Man gave His life as a ransom for many. But in what way the deliverance was to be effected was left undetermined. In one of the three Synoptic Gospels Jesus is reported as saying at the Last Supper that His blood was shed for the remission of sins; but this has been commonly regarded as an interpolation. It seems likely that He deemed His death as in some manner a sacrifice, being, in particular, guided by the description of the suffering servant of the Lord (Isaiah liii.). But all this is too indefinite for us to draw conclusions as to His person from the sacrificial import of His death.

We may briefly notice the suggestion in two passages in these gospels of another kind of relation to His disciples after His departure. There is the saying: "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." Does this mean actual presence of the person of Jesus? And if so, how could He be present among several groups of Christians at the same time? Or is it a picturesque and impressive way of saying that God will answer the prayers of gatherings of Christians, almost as if Jesus were among them, since they are carrying on His work in the world? There is also to be considered the benediction of Jesus on the Apostles recorded as spoken after His resurrection: "Lo! I am with you alway, even unto the end of the age." This indicates some sort of continued influence of Jesus on His Church.

We may presume that in the early years of Christianity there prevailed the eschatology of the Synoptic Gospels, with the corresponding Christology. So St. Peter in the Acts of the Apostles: "This is He which is ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead." Little apparently was made of the crucifixion as an atonement; it was viewed rather as a crime on the part of the Jews. But there came one very important new element into Christianity—the experience of the Holy Spirit. The early Christians commonly had a sense of being inspired and quickened by the Spirit of God, especially at times of self-consecration to Jesus, and when there was important work to be done, and in difficulties and trials.

We have now to consider the Christology of St. Paul. His estimate of Jesus is in part determined by the Jewish eschatology which he inherited (1 Thessalonians iv. 16; 2 Thessalonians i. 7). But there are various other elements in his religion and theology which together developed his Christology.

In the first place, there was the sense of atonement from sin leading to righteousness in virtue of Divine influence. This experience followed upon acceptance of Jesus as the Christ. Since this was especially connected in his mind with the thought of the crucifixion of Jesus, and since sacrifice was integral to the Jewish religion, St. Paul naturally regarded the death of Jesus as the great sacrifice for the sins of mankind (1 Corinthians v. 7). But, more particularly, he thought of men as being delivered from their sins through mystical union with the crucified Christ and entering into new life through mystical union with the risen Christ (Romans vi. 2–11; Colossians ii. 12, iii. 1). How this takes place, St. Paul does not try to explain. He seems to have thought of Christ as an omnipresent personality, who in virtue of His death and resurrection had powers for affecting like changes in those who came to Him in faith.

In the second place, St. Paul speaks of Christ as the new life of the soul which comes through justification, as in these phrases: "I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me"; "I travail in birth, till Christ be formed in you"; "Jesus Christ is in you"; "Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith." What sort of Christology must that be according to which Christ may actually be the inner life of another person? It seems as if the idea of Christ ruling and fashioning the soul and the idea of the soul having the nature of Christ were melted into each other. Elsewhere the distinction between Christ and the Christ-nature in Christians is maintained, as in the words: "The last Adam became a life-giving spirit," and in the declaration that Christians were by God "preordained to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren."

In the third place, St. Paul speaks of Christ as the medium and the substance of Christian life and activity: "I say the truth in Christ"; "God causeth us to triumph in Christ"; "In the sight of God speak we in Christ"; "God hath blessed us with every spiritual blessing in heavenly places in Christ"; "Ye are all one in Christ Jesus"; "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature"; "There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus"; "My bonds became manifest in Christ"; "To me to live is Christ." Christ, for St. Paul, seems to be the name of the life of Christians so far as it is in accordance with the will of Christ. But he has also the idea of Christ as a constant spiritual presence influencing their acts. What sort of Christology does this involve? It is not easy to determine where by "Christ" is meant the actual personal Jesus, and where the language is metaphorical.

With regard to all this, it becomes apparent on reflection that, within the field of experience which in the Acts of the Apostles is referred to the Holy Spirit, certain tracts are by St. Paul referred to Christ. Generally, the new life which comes through faith in Jesus as the Messiah is denoted in the Acts of the Apostles as the operation of the Holy Ghost; but by St. Paul it is denoted as Christ. According to St. Paul, Christ is the power which transforms and quickens the soul, Christ is the new nature of the soul itself, Christ is the life that springs from that new nature and is embodied in the order of existence in which the soul finds itself. On the whole, the name "Christ" is used by St. Paul of the Divine in relation to man when It is viewed rather as a permanent source of activity, the name "the (Holy) Spirit" is used of the same when It is viewed rather as the activity itself. Other differences flow from the associations of the notions: for instance, the Holy Spirit is connected with sanctification and instruction; Christ is connected with the atonement of God and man, since that proceeds from the historical death and resurrection of the Messiah. But the Twain merge into one another in the writings of St. Paul, as this passage testifies: "Ye are not in the flesh, but in the spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you. But if any man hath not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His. And if Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the spirit is life because of righteousness." Here "the Spirit of Christ" is like a middle term, through which the Spirit of God dwelling in man and Christ dwelling in man are identified. In another passage he definitely says, "The Lord" (presumably Christ) "is the Spirit," and uses the expression "the Lord the Spirit." It is almost as if for St. Paul Christ were the Spirit of God operating and existing in certain ways.

There is a fourth respect in which St. Paul helped to form ecclesiastical Christology. He identified Christ with the Being which was supposed to link God with the World. In the post-prophetic literature there grew up, under Greek influence, the conception of the Wisdom of God which emanated from God and was the Agent in creation and the Soul of the World. This theological trend was largely motived by the desire to maintain the holiness of Jahwe. Now it was not a very great step from the thought of Christ as existing about and in His followers to the thought of Christ as being the Agent in creation and the Soul of the World. Accordingly St. Paul adopted the Alexandrian theology and described Christ as "the image of the invisible

God, the firstborn of all creation ; for in Him were all things created, in the heavens and upon the earth, things visible and things invisible—thrones, dominions, principalities, powers ; all things have been created through Him and unto Him ; and He is before all things, and in Him all things consist." Christ is thus the principle of the World, the vital and rational unification of all things, the all-embracing purpose immanent in existence.

This notion of an immanent Divine, in distinction from a transcendent Divine, may commend itself on account of the wish to think of God as at once intimately connected with the World and of a goodness untainted by the World. This need not imply that the immanent Divine is rendered impure through contact with the World, but rather that He maintains His purity through relation to the transcendent Divine. But the question that now arises is whether, on the assumption of such an immanent Divine, the identification of Him with Jesus is permissible. We must wonder whether it is possible that a life which is the governing principle of all Nature should become for some years a human consciousness with its limitations, and that Nature should the while continue orderly. But it is to be observed that St. Paul's identification of Jesus with the Logos was prepared by these stages : the belief that Jesus was the Messiah, who was to return in heavenly state to judge mankind and inaugurate the Kingdom of God ; the belief that Jesus constituted an ubiquitous atoning power between God and man ; the belief that Jesus was the spiritual medium of the existence of His followers and their life both individually and collectively.

In the Epistle to the Hebrews the main importance attached to Christ arises from the sacrificial view of His death. Christ is both victim and priest. But it is not explained how through sacrifice souls are cleansed of sin. The author, being familiar with a religion in which the most prominent element was sacrifice, naturally treated the death of the Messiah as the supreme and complete offering for sin. We may notice, however, that the conception of Christ as the life of His followers, so familiar in the writings of St. Paul, is foreign to this book, and, indeed, to all the rest of the New Testament, with the exception of the Gospel and Epistles of John.

But, like St. Paul, he identifies Christ with the creative Wisdom of God known from Alexandrian theology, supposing these passages from the Psalms to refer to Him: "Thy throne, O God,[1] is for ever and ever; And the sceptre of uprightness is the sceptre of Thy Kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity; Therefore God, Thy God, hath anointed Thee with the oil of gladness above Thy fellows." "Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth, And the heavens are the works of Thy hands: They shall perish; but Thou continuest: And they all shall wax old as doth a garment; And as a mantle shalt Thou roll them up; And as a vesture shall they be changed: But Thou art the same, and Thy years shall not fail." This is not the Athanasian Christology, but if it be taken seriously, it is hard to stop at any lesser estimate of Christ.

In the Revelation of John the Divine, Christ is depicted much as in the eschatological portions of the Synoptic Gospels, except that the ethical tone of the former is lacking—in fact, in accordance with Jewish apocalyptic. But here also we may trace the influence of the Alexandrian theology—at least, the Lamb is associated with God in adoration (v. 13).

---

[1] 'Ο Θεός; the ὁ is apparently vocative. Christ is still to God ὁ Θεός σου.

We have now to deal with the ideas concerning Christ in the Gospel and Epistles of John. Now there are strong grounds for disbelieving in the strict historicity of the Fourth Gospel.[1] There are probable

---

[1] The question of authorship should be kept distinct from the question of historicity. These are a few of the reasons against the latter :—

1. The style of the discourses is, on the one hand, unlike anything in the Synoptic Gospels, and, on the other, is common to the First Epistle of St. John, and also to words attributed to John the Baptist in this gospel. In one place the discourse seems to pass over vaguely into the evangelist's own teaching (iii. 16–21).

2. The actual teaching of Jesus according to the Fourth Gospel conflicts with that recorded in the Synoptic Gospels. The greatest love according to the Fourth Gospel is to lay down one's life for one's friends ; in the Sermon on the Mount men are bidden to love and to do good to their enemies.

3. The setting of the discourses in the Synoptics is natural, the setting of them in the Fourth Gospel is on the whole artificial. The accusations in the former against the religious leaders of the Jews concern plain derelictions in their duty—*e.g.*, that they had invented additions to the law, and unduly emphasised ceremonial while neglecting morality. In the latter Jesus is represented as blaming them for not knowing the mystical truths of His Person and the new life, although they had, presumably, no chance of learning them ; and as declaring these truths in a manner that would naturally give offence ; *vide* esp. viii. 12 and foll : (cp. Prof. Burkitt, "The Gospel History and its Transmission," chapter entitled "The Fourth Gospel"). Also several discourses start with absurdly literal misunderstandings of some saying of Jesus, which are in the gross highly improbable.

4. According to the Synoptic Gospels Jesus does not divulge His Christhood till comparatively late in His ministry, and then at first only to His disciples, telling them to keep the fact secret (Mark viii. 27–30). The report of the trial before the Sanhedrin makes it evident that this claim of Jesus was not well known, since the witnesses do not declare it, and the High Priest has to ask Jesus whether He believed Himself to be the Messiah. In the Fourth Gospel He continually announces Himself to be the Son of God.

5. Is it only fancy that there breathes in some places an egotism

signs of independent true tradition embodied in this gospel. But much in it is certainly due to the religious and theological mind of one or more of the followers of Jesus.

The Gospel and First Epistle of John belong to a class of writings which we may briefly call "mystical." They deal with the inner life of the soul by means largely of symbols. The very style, with its repetitions and solemn rhythms, suggests the Divine peace which passeth all understanding.

The main contention of these books may be thus summarised: "Jesus Christ is Divine life in man." To this the following testify: "I am the bread of life"; "I am the light of the world"; "I am the way, and the truth, and the life"; "Abide in Me, and I in you"; "I am the vine, ye are the branches"; "If a man love Me, he will keep My word: and My Father will love him, and We will come unto him, and make Our abode with him"; "I in them, and Thou in Me"; "Ye shall abide in the Son, and in the Father"; "He that hath the Son, hath the life." The metaphorical character of this language would render precarious attempts to base definite Christology on it. But it does make for a view of Christ as at once vastly greater than any human soul and intrinsically of the same nature as God.[1]

---

which not even the strictest Athanasian Christology would render appropriate? How different is the modesty and tact of the Jesus of the Synoptic Gospels!

[1] In a few passages the person of Jesus seems to be identified with His words—v. 47, vi. 63, xii. 47, 48, xiv. 23, xv. 7. *Vide* especially vi. 63: "The words that I have spoken to you are spirit, and are life." It has been suggested to translate *τὰ ῥήματα* "the things I have spoken to you about," viz., the flesh and blood of Jesus. But this is practically

We should take into consideration these two passages: "I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Helper, that He may be with you for ever, even the Spirit of Truth. . . . I will not leave you desolate: I come unto you. . . . In that day ye shall know that I am in My Father, and ye in Me,

---

impossible, as verse 63 would then mean: "It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: My flesh and blood are spirit and are life," thus involving a set contradiction. Jesus in vi. 63 is explaining His paradoxical statement that eating His flesh and blood gives eternal life—that is, that in spite of His being a human creature, He is the mediator of Divine salvation. He explains that by "flesh" He did not mean literally flesh. "True," He says in effect, "the flesh profiteth nothing; it is My words (proceeding out of My human body, My flesh and blood) that are spiritually profitable." Certainly there is an apparent contradiction between "He that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood hath eternal life" (vi. 54) and "the flesh profiteth nothing" (vi. 63). But "flesh" is used in the former sentence metaphorically, and in the second literally, where the interpretation is given. We should notice also xv. 7: "If ye abide in Me, and My words abide in you," Jesus seeming to identify Himself with His words. Should we, then, maintain that "I" and "Me" in the mouth of the Johannine Jesus are equivalent throughout this theological teaching to "My words" or "My teaching"? But surely it would be a strange way of emphasising the importance of His teaching to say: "I am the bread of life"; "I am the light of the world"; "I am the good shepherd"; "I am the way, and the truth, and the life." And why, we should be inclined to ask, say so much about the importance of the doctrine and so little as to what the doctrine really consists of? Why direct men's minds from the doctrine to seeking something mysterious in the personality of the teacher? If the words constitute the means to salvation, it is very misleading to say "I" so frequently. But rather should we recognise that the words of Jesus do indeed constitute the gate to eternal life, but that the author of the gospel passes from them, perhaps almost insensibly, to that to which the words lead—namely, the life itself which is the personality or spirit of Jesus, whatever this ultimately may be. Perhaps, indeed, he occasionally substitutes the words for the personality for the sake of those who cannot at once grasp his meaning, but must be led gradually from the teaching of Jesus to the personality of Jesus. First, he would say, listen to the teaching, and through that ye will come to Christ Himself. But it belongs to the mystical character of the book not to draw clear distinctions.

and I in you." "It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Helper will not come unto you; but if I go, I will send Him unto you. And He, when He is come, will convict the world in respect of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: of sin, because they believe not on Me; of righteousness, because I go to the Father, and ye behold Me no more; of judgment, because the prince of this world hath been judged. . . . A little while, and ye behold Me no more; and again a little while, and ye shall see Me." It is as if the presence of God and the presence of the Holy Spirit and the presence of Jesus in the souls of men were, to some degree at least, the same.[1]

The author of the Fourth Gospel adopted the Alexandrian doctrine of the Logos, and presented Jesus as an incarnation of the Logos: "The Word became flesh, and dwelt among us." We can hardly doubt that his view of Jesus embodied in the gospel arose out of deep religious experience, in the main independently of the metaphysical theology with which he connected it. He took over the theory of Philo because it seemed to harmonise with his religion and religious beliefs.

The conception of the Logos was the fruit of a union of Greek philosophy and Hebrew religion. More particularly, it was a blending of the idea of the word of the Lord to the prophets of Israel with the idea of the immanent reason of the Cosmos proceeding from the One. It probably had no very definite meaning in the mind of the author of the Fourth Gospel.

---

[1] *Vide* Dr. W. R. Inge, in "Cambridge Biblical Essays," "The Theology of the Fourth Gospel," p. 283: "When the Johannine Christ promises to come again, He clearly refers to the gift of the Paraclete."

Perhaps "the principle of the self-revelation of God" is a fair description of what he understood by the term. Still, we may doubt whether he really made the Logos-doctrine his own, whether it did not remain an imperfectly assimilated addendum to his creed. But how far, we may wonder, did he regard the Logos as a person? And was Jesus the whole Logos incarnate, or only an incarnation of the Logos, so that there might conceivably exist contemporaneously other incarnations of the same? On the one hand, he seems to represent Jesus as looking back to a pre-existence in Heaven. On the other hand, he does not speak of the Logos as if it were the soul of Jesus before His life in the world. In view of the predominantly mystical character of his intellect, and also of the comparative vagueness of the conception of personality in the philosophy of that period, it seems probable that he had no definite notion thereon.

The personality of Christ soon became the subject of theological discussion. The authority of the canonical books was generally acknowledged. But they did not concur in any clear doctrine on this subject. The problem was, in brief, so to conceive Christ as to allow for His function in bestowing on men the Divine nature, without interfering with monotheism.

The rationalistic solution—namely, the doctrine that Christ was a man in whom the Logos (the Word of God), which had spoken through the prophets, dwelt in a pre-eminent degree (*μᾶλλον καὶ διαφερόντως*)—was felt to be inadequate. It conflicted with Scripture, and did not seem to maintain the majesty of the Redeemer. It was condemned in the person of Paul of Samosata. If, as seems probable, he viewed the

Divinity of Jesus Christ rather as a superadded quality than as a personal essence, we must in a measure agree with this condemnation.[1]

But the doctrine of the Logos, differently applied, afforded what seemed a better reconciliation of the two theological postulates. The Logos was neither exactly personal nor impersonal ; It was an activity of God, and yet distinct from Him.[2] And so Christ could be held to be fully Divine, and therefore capable of making men Divine, and yet monotheism was not destroyed, as it would have been by the addition of another person (in the modern sense) to the Godhead. In the glorious theology of Origen God appeared in transcendental unity and diversity.

But, in fact, the opposition between the Divinity of Christ and the unity of God was not wholly dissolved, but to some extent only blurred through the Logos theology. This theology, however, provided conditions for the growth of the idea of Jesus as God the Son. For it provided a conception which, while seemingly constituting a bridge between Jesus and God, insensibly became personified into the tremendous conception of another Being equal to the primal God. And as this conception was taking form in the minds of theologians, it evoked a vigorous protest that it was a violation of the unity of God. Whereupon these theologians, seeing no adequate retreat from the difficulty, defended and developed their notion of Christ and His unity with the Father. And to these two

---

[1] *Vide* Harnack, " History of Dogma," English trans., vol. iii., pp. 41 and foll.

[2] Harnack, *ibid.*, vol. ii., p. 206 : The Apologists' "conception of the Logos continually compelled them to identify the Logos and the Spirit, just as they not infrequently define Christianity as the belief in the true God and in His Son, without mentioning the Spirit."

Beings in the Godhead was shortly added a third, namely, the Spirit of God. So arose the doctrines of the Godhead of Christ and of the Holy Trinity.

The Athanasian Christology was largely determined by soteriology, as expressed in the words: "God became man that man might become God (or Divine)." Arianism was prompted by theological and metaphysical considerations. But the mind of the Church strove to magnify as much as possible the redemption and salvation of mankind, and therefore contended for the highest conceivable rank for the Redeemer and Saviour. He must be God; nothing inferior would suffice.

In the earlier stages of the controversy the question of the generation of the Son was to the fore. Arius maintained that there must have been a time when the Son did not exist, as, indeed, the filial relationship indicated. This seemed to Athanasius to be equivalent to a denial of the full Godhead of Christ. Rather must it be held with Origen, "The Son is eternally generated."[1] But another and more fundamental question superseded that as to the eternity of the Son, namely, the question of the relation of the being of the Son to the being of the Father. Various phrases to express this were suggested: ἀνόμοιος, ὅμοιος, ὅμοιος κατὰ τὰς γράφας, ὅμοιος κατὰ τὴν οὐσίαν, ὅμοιος ἐκ τῆς οὐσίας, ὁμοιούσιος, ὁμοούσιος. The Church finally adopted ὁμοούσιος ("of one substance"), meaning by this that the Son had both the same essential nature as the Father, and derived it from the Father. However, the dogma

---

[1] Athanasius, "Orationes contra Arianos," book i., § 14: "The Son was not begotten as man from man, that He should be later in existence than the existence of His Father; but He is the offspring of God, and being the own Son of God who is for ever, exists eternally."

Ὁ *υἱὸς ὁμοούσιος τῷ πατρί* allowed a little latitude of interpretation. Athanasius understood it in a semi-Sabellian sense, "The Son is of identical substance with the Father"; the Cappadocian theologians rather in the sense, "The Son is of like substance with the Father." The one side clave rather to the unity, the other to the difference in the Godhead.[1]

The Son had also to be distinguished from the Father. Presently also the Holy Spirit had likewise to be related to and distinguished from the Father. Accordingly, God was said to be one substance in three hypostases. Ὑπόστασις was represented in Latin by *persona*, which was strictly a translation of πρόσωπον (aspect). Ὑπόστασις hovered between "mode of existence" and "individual." "Individualised form of existence" fairly represents it. *Persona* did not mean person in this connection. On the other hand, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost were commonly thought of as conscious entities—that is, persons.

---

[1] *Vide* Harnack, *ibid.*, vol. iv., p. 97: "The community of substance in the sense of equality or likeness of substance, not in that of unity of substance, was from this time the orthodox doctrine in the East."

P. 99, note: "From the writings of the Homoiousians and the Cappadocians we can accordingly easily gather that the *ἐκ τῆς οὐσίας τοῦ πατρός* presented a far greater difficulty to the half-friends of the Nicene Creed than the Ὁμοούσιος; for ὁμοούσιος, not without some show of fairness, might be interpreted as *ὅμοιος κατ᾽οὐσίαν*, while, on the contrary, the ἐκ τῆς οὐσίας, both in what it said and in what it excluded—the will, namely—seemed to leave the door open to Sabellianism. It follows also from 'Athanasius de Synodis' that he considered ἐκ τῆς οὐσίας as of supreme importance; for, in a way that is very characteristic of him, he observes that ὁμοούσιος is equal to ὁμοιούσιος ἐκ τῆς οὐσίας—that is, whoever intentionally avows his belief in the ὁμοούσιος without the ἐκ τῆς οὐσίας avows his belief in it as a Homoiousian."

P. 100: "The great difference which existed between the old Faith and the Cappadocian neo-orthodoxy was no longer understood, and that under cover of the Ὁμοούσιος a sort of Homoiousianism had in general been reached, the view which has really been the orthodox one in all the churches until this day."

Next the Church found itself compelled to define the relation between the Divine nature and the human nature in Christ. In this it was guided by the motive to represent the union as being as intimate as possible with the integrity of both the elements. Hence it rejected Apollinarianism, according to which it was not a complete human nature which was united to the Divine. It rejected Nestorianism, according to which there was no personal union. It rejected Eutychianism, according to which the human nature became merged in the Divine. Finally it determined that there were two wills in Christ, since otherwise the humanity would have been incomplete.

Throughout the Church was moved by soteriological considerations: man must be shown to have been completely redeemed without ceasing to be man. A remark of a philosopher of the nineteenth century, Edward Caird, is here apposite, that the problems which in the fourth century were worked out in reference to the relation of the Divine and the human in Christ were subsequently being worked out in reference to the Divine and the human in man.

But the day of the Græco-Roman civilization drew to its close, and the night of the Dark Ages came on. The intellect fell asleep, retaining, however, tight hold of the dogmas it had fashioned. And so the centuries slipped by, and mankind renewed itself in rest.

When the new day dawned, man started out on fresh careers of achievement—practical, intellectual, moral. It has now to bring to bear its new science and philosophy upon the problems connected with religion. And in doing so, it is unable wholly to accept dogmas constructed by means of narrower and feebler knowledge and thought. In particular, it finds the ancient doctrine of God and Christ indefensible in the light of a keener sense of personality and more extensive knowledge of how the World lives and grows. There appears grave incompatibility, which drives to ampler thought.

Now what lesson may we gather from this review of the development of Christology? The development seems to have been determined in the main by profound religious and idealistic instinct. At any parting of the ways the direction taken seems to have been in accord with the truer and stronger Christian feeling, and yet the result is in conflict with the wider and more penetrating knowledge of a later age. How may that be? If we cling both to Christianity and to belief in progress and enlightenment, how shall we escape confusion?

This impression is received from the history of Christological dogma—that, the questions being formulated as they were, the Church could hardly have answered them otherwise, but that there was some error in the formulation. And this error seems to be connected with the idea of personality. Because the thinkers of the Græco-Roman age had not undertaken to investigate personality, Christian theologians, in discussing the presuppositions of their religion, were dealing with unanalyzed complexes.

Want of understanding as to the relation of the personality of Christ to the process of human redemption and salvation appears at the beginning, in the expectation of the return of Jesus within the existing generation to establish the Kingdom of God. It appears in the assertion of St. Paul that Christ constitutes the new life of Christians and their spiritual activity and atmosphere. It appears in the Johannine doctrines of the mutual indwelling of Christ and His followers, and that to have eternal life is to have the Son of God. It appears in the practical identification of Christ and the Holy Spirit in the writings of both St. Paul and St. John. It appears in the identification by both these of Jesus with the Divine instrument of creation emanating from God. It appears in the merging by the early theologians of the idea of Jesus and the idea of the Logos and the idea of the Spirit. It appears in the conflict between Athanasians and Arians, the former refusing to count the Saviour as less than God, the latter refusing to destroy monotheism by adding another person to the Godhead. It appears in the subsequent difficulties in representing the union of Divine nature and human nature in Christ. It is this inherited confusion concerning the personality of Christ which is largely responsible for the contention at the present time between the thought of the new age and traditional Christianity.

We must now undertake our second inquiry: What is the religious experience of Christianity? Christianity comprises a variety of elements—a certain morality; certain belief concerning the relation of God to mankind; faith in God as determined by Jesus Christ; prayer in accordance with all this; a society, or several societies, for the purpose of promoting this morality and belief and faith and prayer; ceremonies conducted by these societies as instrumental thereto. But through all this the main object of Christianity is generally supposed to be that souls should gain a new kind of life, called eternal and Divine. Now we have to consider how Jesus Christ assists men to attain this life.

The method by which Jesus assists towards the attainment by others of eternal life is to be gathered from His own teaching, according to the record: "And behold, a certain lawyer stood up and tempted Him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? And He said unto him, What is written in the law? How readest thou? And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself. And He said unto him, Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live." To another who asked Him, "What shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?" He asked whether he had kept the Hebrew commandments, and, on receiving an affirmative answer, proceeded: "One thing thou lackest: go, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in Heaven: and come, follow me." Jesus, then, enables men to attain eternal life through teaching them love to God and to their fellow-men. This in an extreme form is renunciation of worldly goods and following of Jesus. Jesus also declared that those who made great sacrifices on behalf of the Kingdom of God would receive manifold blessings in the present time, and in the age to come eternal life.

According to the early Christians, men became saved through faith in Jesus as the Christ, and, in particular, through faith in Jesus as having been crucified for the sins of mankind. Upon analysis this faith is found to comprise two elements, belief in the Divine forgiveness of sins, and self-devotion to Christ. These are partially identical with the conditions of eternal life described by Jesus Himself, since to believe in the forgiveness of God is to prepare to love Him, and to devote oneself to Christ is to carry on His work of love for mankind.

We may judge, then, that Jesus through His character and career enables men to attain eternal life because He thereby enables them the more intensely to love God and their fellow-men. The death of Jesus, through indicating the Divine love which undergoes suffering for the sake of saving men, calls forth trust and penitence. And the resurrection of Jesus is significant both as evidence that God favoured Him, and therefore He was the Christ, and as pointing to a higher life superior to mortality, to which the faith and love manifested on the Cross bring the soul. Jesus, then, in His life and death and resurrection saves men in that He presents His teaching in striking and convincing form. Jesus helps men to attain eternal life through producing in them, by His teaching and character and career and crucifixion and resurrection, that religion and morality which are favourable to the birth and growth in them of the spiritual nature.

But we have also to consider the experience of the spiritual which follows and accompanies the religion and morality due to Jesus. This falls under two heads: the experience of the influence of a mighty spiritual power on the soul, and the experience of spiritual life in the soul. The former is commonly known as the working of the Holy Spirit, both in the New Testament and in modern religious experience. To some there may seem to come an actual presence of Jesus Christ to the soul; but we must take into account the difficulty of defining spiritual experiences and the tendency in the mind to personification. But also the actual new life of the soul has seemed to be in some sense Christ—for instance, according to the expressions, "Christ liveth in me," and "He that hath the Son hath the life." But it appears to be a metaphysical impossibility that the person of Jesus could actually be the innermost life of a number of souls. Nor could we rightly demand this interpretation of language which expresses religion rather than science. Likewise, we can hardly suppose that in such phrases as "speaking the truth in Christ" and "triumphing in Christ" Christ means simply the person of Jesus. On the other hand, this language does indicate some sort of identity between the Jesus of history and the new life of the Christian, which is won through the faith and conduct called forth by Jesus.

The typical religious experiences of Christianity comprise religion and morality in accordance with the teaching and character and career of Jesus, the sense of being worked on by invisible Divine agency, and the birth and growth of new and higher life. It is felt that the life which was in the historical Jesus, of which His teaching and acts and career were the outcome, and the Divine agency operating on the soul, and the new life in the soul, are somehow the same. They are all Christ. The question before us is, In what sense are they the same? The answer to that should help to the answer of another question, What is Christ?

The conclusion forces itself upon us that the identity subsisting between these various realities called Christ is not the sort of identity that subsists between the various states and activities of a person. This is not to imply that Christ is not personal, but rather that Christ transcends personality. Christ is such that He can be the innermost life of several persons, and the principle of their union with one another and with God. The identity between the various forms of the existence of Christ we may call rather a spiritual identity. And Christ is a great spiritual reality including persons.

We may now construct the idea of Christ. The spiritual nature and life of souls are Christ. But all these units of life belong to a great process of Divine incarnation, and, potentially at least, are spiritually interconnected. Christ, then, is Divine life coming forth from God and incarnating itself and incarnate in souls and constituting altogether a great vital unity of spirit, and, being so, Christ may also be accounted the Agent in the whole World-process.

Now Christ was typically incarnate in the Jesus of history, so that Jesus presents to mankind the signs of Christ in human nature, and thereby manifests to them the way to win Christ. On account of the Divine life in Jesus, He taught love to God and love to man, and lived and died in accordance with that twofold principle ; and throughout His career, and especially in His resurrection, He manifested the power of the Divine life in Him. And so, as example of the Divine life in man, He is the one to whom allegiance conditions the soul for attaining the Divine life and so becoming a member of Christ.

Christ, as meaning the Divine life coming forth from God and becoming the innermost life of souls, includes the Holy Spirit. And so the Logos as conceived in early Christianity included the Holy Spirit. But if we think of the Holy Spirit as Divine energy acting on souls, Christ will be rather the Divine life in souls. God, according to this doctrine, is in vital union with Christ through the Holy Spirit. But also the unifying force between souls and the reaction of souls towards

God may be accounted as the Holy Spirit. God the Father will then be the original fount of life, God the Son will be that life existing in its highest form in dependent beings, God the Holy Ghost will be the Divine energy unifying the different centres of Godhead. But we cannot definitely delimit the Persons of the Godhead. The Third interpenetrates the First and the Second, being, indeed, dynamic as contrasted with static Divinity.

A possible objection to this theology would be that we do not know that the spiritual life is the absolute Divine life. May not true Divinity be superior to what we know as spiritual, as the spiritual is superior to the mental? Jesus Christ might conceivably be the inaugurator of a spiritual humanity, and, therefore, spiritual Himself, without partaking in the essence of absolute Godhead. On that hypothesis, however, true incarnation of Godhead might be imagined to lie in the future, so that the doctrines of the Trinity and the Incarnation would be not so much untrue as inapplicable under Christianity. But vivid experience of the spiritual seems to carry with it the conviction that the spiritual is the ultimate reality. We may be confident that it is so if therein love fully realises its nature.

It may be worth while to observe that this doctrine of Christ implies a true personal union of Divinity and humanity. Godhead in the form of Christ, although extending beyond the personality of Jesus, yet in union with lower forms of consciousness was His very life. It was as much part of Him as one's thoughts and volitions and feelings are part of oneself. The personality of Jesus was Divine. This Christology is, therefore, not any kind of Nestorianism. On the other hand, the lower forms of consciousness continued along with and were, we may suppose, enhanced by the Divinity. And what is true of Jesus in this respect is true of the ideal human being.

The Divine life proceeds from God, and it comes to constitute the essence of dependent beings, called souls. But it seems also true that the Divine nature existed latently in all souls from the beginning. Wherefore the action of the Spirit of God in making souls members of Christ is to stimulate the germ of Divinity in them to life. The Holy Spirit causes the emergence of the innermost being of souls. For spirit is rooted in persons, but is the power of interpenetration of persons.

And yet does this Christology altogether satisfy? For, surely, part of the attraction of Christianity has lain in the thought of the sympathy with human agony of the Divine which redeems mankind. God was believed to have suffered in giving His Son to die on the Cross: "God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son." And Jesus Himself, having experienced human life, was thought to be personally near to souls to deliver them: "We have not a high priest that cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities."

It is not ancient theology which moves us here, but a sense of what love is and what good is. Not to experience pain and misery and limitation were to be without the deepest and intensest love and the perfection of spirit. To represent God as apart from human struggles is to represent Him as rather benevolent than loving. Not merely for man's sake, but for God's sake God must suffer. One feels that God must plumb the depths of human agony if He is to be worthy of being one with all in love. The supreme ecstasy of spirit holds within itself the consciousness of extreme bitterness strongly uniting soul to soul.

This need not lead us back to the doctrine of God as consisting of two or three equal Individuals, but rather should it incline us to believe that God suffers, both in pity for all who suffer, and in those who have spiritual life in virtue of spiritual union with them. The first form of suffering leads to the second. For the knowledge of the pain of another creates an unbearable longing to experience that pain. The suffering of God both for and in Jesus may stand as a type of the suffering of God in general.

We saw that Christ extends beyond the person of Jesus in that Christ lives and works as the innermost being of redeemed souls ; in like manner may we extend our conception of Christ into the life of God. For Christ has virtually meant to many just this suffering of God for and in man. The unity of Christ so conceived is, as under the former conception, spirit transcending personality. Jesus on the Cross is spiritually one with God redeeming mankind through suffering. We may, indeed, think of the Holy Trinity as stages in the love of God—God putting forth souls from Himself, God entering into the experience of souls with limitation and pain, God in spiritual union with souls.

But what is or was Jesus? We have been considering Him as the standard manifestation in human life of God and the way to God. And we have come to believe that the Divine life in Him is also in His followers, and, emanating from God, is the principal power in the growth of the World. But can we know about, or with any probability conjecture at anything concerning the person of Jesus outside His career in a human body of which we have records? According to Christian tradition He had lived before in Heaven and took human form in order to save mankind. And Christians have believed in personal communion with Jesus after His disappearance from among men. But if we regard the soul of Jesus as just one among other souls, and Divine in the same sense as other men have become and will become Divine, being, in the language of Scripture, "the firstborn among many brethren," must we, then, reject belief in His pre-existence in Heaven and personal communion with His followers after His ascension? Are these ideas at best metaphors and personifications of processes which mankind is coming to understand less indirectly now?

We found that the traditional conception of Christ was involved in certain difficulties arising from the progress of science. Upon examination it appeared that these difficulties arose from a certain application of the notion of personality to the idea of Christ, and that this application had been made gradually during an age of inferior scientific knowledge to our own and with less acute sense of personality. And we attempted, by readjusting the idea of personality to that of Christ, and, in particular, by substituting for personal unity spiritual unity, to preserve the religious values of Christianity, while delivering it from its scientific entanglements. And in the course of this argument Jesus has for us, as it were, ceased to be a Being who has lived for ever with the Creator of the World and is equal to the Creator of the World, and has become one among the myriad souls dependent on God that pass through human existence, though, indeed, He was truly of the very essence of God, being spiritual, and the Divinely appointed Leader to all others on this planet in becoming likewise spiritual and Divine. But if Jesus is not equal to the Creator of the World, must He, then, be one among human souls? Or what may we suppose Him to be? Or, since the main religious values latent in the old Christology have been secured, may we dismiss this question and those concerning His alleged pre-existence and His personal influence on men after His ascension, as unimportant for Christianity?

It has been urged as the fundamental contradiction between the traditional and liberal Christology that, according to the former, the Divinity of Jesus is different in kind from the Divinity of other men, whereas, according to the latter, the difference is of degree rather than of kind. Now the upholders of the former might admit that the Divinity of both Jesus and His followers comprised the same spiritual essence, but would contend that in Jesus Divinity involved also pre-existence in a heavenly state and personal influence on mankind after His disappearance from among them. But can we be sure that other souls may not have existed before birth and personally after death have exercised influence on men in the flesh? Philosophers and poets have declared the former, and abundant experience testifies to the latter.

The absolute humanity of Jesus, then, does not seem to forbid to entertain something of the traditional belief in these respects as expressed in this passage of St. Paul: "Have this mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of God, counted it not a thing to be grasped at to be equal with God, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, yea, the death of the cross.

Wherefore also God highly exalted Him, and gave unto Him the name which is above every name; that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of beings in heaven and beings on earth and beings under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."[1] Jesus did, we may believe, exist in a heavenly state before His birth in Palestine; His incarnation did involve real self-sacrifice and humiliation; and He lives on personally as Leader of the human race in its march towards the Kingdom of God.

Such, then, is our Christology. It is one that includes both the Athanasian and the Unitarian doctrine. Jesus, in virtue of Divine life, in which through Him other souls partake, is of one substance with the Father, very God of very God. Jesus was not merely man, but a man, a soul not radically different in origin and destiny from other souls. Sabellianism also is found to have its element of the truth: the Father truly suffered and suffers in Jesus and all His children. Even Arianism, maintaining the supernatural in Jesus, but refusing Him equality with God, was not altogether false, though it wrongly marked off God from Jesus and Jesus from man with absolute differences. The history of Christology is seen to involve contests between parts of the truth of Christ, which the intellect of the time was not capable of fitting together into one, and of which we may suppose the parts of greater religious importance for the age prevailed. But the heresies were destined to revive and protest, until the truth for which they were responsible should gain catholic recognition.

---

[1] The natural interpretation of this passage is to be got by giving *οὐχ ἁρπαγμὸν ἡγήσατο τὸ εἶναι ἶσα Θεῷ* its literal translation, "did not think equality with God a thing to be grasped at." This makes a good antithesis: so far from aiming at being more than He was, on the contrary, He humbled Himself. Accordingly, Jesus had already been of the Divine order of beings (*ἐν μόρφῃ Θεοῦ*), without being on an equality with God. But the result of His voluntary humiliation was that God exalted Him to a position which might be described as being on an equality with God" (*ἶσα Θεῷ*), in that He is universally worshipped. We may wonder whether *ἐν μόρφῃ Θεοῦ* and *ἶσα Θεῷ* are equivalent to *ἐν μόρφῃ τοῦ Θεοῦ* and *ἶσα τῷ Θεῷ*. *Vide* Beyschlag, "New Testament Theology," *ad loc.*

And now let us for a few moments contemplate Jesus as He is presented by the most authentic records. He preached and He lived—first, love to God and love to man ; secondly, the coming of the Kingdom of God, of which He regarded Himself as in some manner the inaugurator. But He found men in general ill-prepared for the Kingdom of God, and that, not so much on account of what we call sin, as on account of conventional morality and artificial religion and business and regard for the objects of ordinary activity. He was animated by fierce hatred of normal estimates of right and value. Not acknowledged vices and follies, but confident judgments of every-day life, with their air of common sense, such as we might imagine asserted with the phrase "of course"—these angered and saddened Him bitterly and deeply. For it was just these that hampered men from the free and rich life which was offered to them. Thus, He inveighed against the arid and finicking religion of the representatives of Judaism, especially when it led to contempt and callousness. He bade men abstain from retaliation, and urged them to unlimited generosity. He deprecated taking trouble about food and clothes. He declared the pursuit of money to be incompatible with the service of God, and the possession of wealth to make it humanly impossible for a man to enter the

Kingdom of God. And for discipleship to Himself He demanded severance of ties of kinship and willingness to suffer violent death.

These sayings may profoundly move and comfort even those who feel they do not quite understand them. They may sound in their ears more beautiful than delicate and ethereal poetry. For they give voice to a spirit which would draw men up out of cramping customs and fashions, out of the torturing prejudices of artificial morality and propriety, out of the dulness and the vexation and the falsehood, up and up into a clear, bright infinite, where the soul may spread its wings in freedom. Nay, more ; it is a spirit which would enable men to live in this world, and with much suffering overcome this evil, both for themselves and for others, and win a life ever true and fair and linked to the Eternal.

The teaching of Jesus suggests a soul labouring and suffering with the endurance that comes of the sense of infinite blissful life forcing itself into the limitations and sordidness of mankind and abolishing them—one tortured in the world, and all the while conscious of the mysterious Kingdom of God coming with increasing power resistlessly into humanity, very patient and wistful, with immense pity and love for the erring and struggling souls of men, with a high carelessness of worldly affairs and worldly judgments, going on to awful shame and agony—so beautiful, so pathetic is that figure even now, as the scanty records of words and deeds enable us to see it.

And then let us think of the entrance of the Divine life into humanity, of which process Jesus is the representative, and its growth going on and on, and the wonderful future.

## CHAPTER IV

# THE HOLY SPIRIT

THE relation of the Holy Spirit in redemption to Christ, and the inter-relations of God the Father with the Son and the Spirit, have been subjects of immense and intricate theological discussion. Violence has been done to both logic and Scripture in order to prove and express abstruse dogmas of the Church. But this kind of procedure is not such as to give a deep understanding of Divine truths. Rather must we try to grasp the experience which gave rise to the idea of the Holy Spirit.

In the Hebrew religion the external experience of the life of Nature suggested the idea of the breath of God, breath being thought to constitute life. The word in the Old Testament translated "spirit" signified wind and breath. Then it came to mean life, and, in particular, the vitalising energy of God. The Spirit of God is the agent in creation: "The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters" (Genesis i. 2); "By His spirit the heavens are garnished" (Job xxvi. 13). The Spirit is the source of life: "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul" (Genesis ii. 7). "Thou sendest forth Thy Spirit, they are created; and Thou renewest the face of the ground" (Psalm civ. 30). "Until the Spirit be poured upon us from on high, and the wilderness become a fruitful field, and the fruitful field become a forest" (Isaiah xxxii. 15).

When the prophet was moved to declare a message from Jahwe, he felt that the Divine Spirit was being breathed into him. And so the Spirit is spoken of as operative in prophecy: "Would God that all the Lord's people were prophets, that the Lord would put His Spirit upon them" (Numbers xi. 29). "The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and His word was upon my tongue" (2 Samuel xxiii. 2). "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek" (Isaiah lxi. 1). "And it shall come to pass afterwards, that I will pour out My Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions; and also upon the servants and handmaids will I pour out My Spirit" (Joel ii. 28, 29). The Spirit of God is also the agent in moral purification and improvement: "Take not Thy Holy Spirit from me" (Psalm ii.). "And I will put My Spirit upon you, and cause you to walk in My statutes" (Ezekiel xxxvi. 27). In the Old Testament, though the Spirit of God is thought of as in some degree separate from God, He is never really personified. The nearest approach to personification is perhaps in Isaiah xlviii. 16: "Now the Lord God hath sent me and His Spirit." In the New Testament the Holy Spirit is sometimes spoken of as the agent in prophetic inspiration and in revelation (Luke i. 15, 67; ii. 26; Mark xiii. 11; Acts ii. 4), and, indeed, generally in the operations of God on men (Matthew i. 18, 20; iii. 16; xii. 28; Acts x. 38). But He has a function transcending all others—namely, to be the medium and the ground of that Divine life which corresponds to the fact of Jesus Christ. On account of Christ men receive Divine life from the Holy Spirit, and enter into that living fellowship with God which is life in the Holy Spirit.

This function of the Holy Spirit is hardly to be found in the teaching of Jesus as recorded in the Synoptic Gospels; for the Kingdom of God, as Jesus calls the coming Divine life of mankind, has hardly begun to be realised. We may notice, however, in this connection the saying: "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him!" The book called "The Acts of the Apostles" is practically just the record of the coming of the Holy Ghost into the followers of Jesus. The Holy Ghost is promised by the risen Jesus, and soon after comes in a signal manner to the assembled disciples; and this Peter regards as the commencement of the time prophesied by Joel, when the Spirit of God, instead of coming occasionally to a few, should be the universal and continuous possession of mankind. That men should receive the Holy Ghost is accounted the chief aim of preaching the Gospel (viii. 15, ix. 17, x. 44, xi. 16, xv. 8, xix. 2). In this book we find the transition in process from the view of the Old Testament that the Holy Spirit is the agent by which God inspires knowledge and strength, to the specifically Christian view that the Holy Spirit is the agent by which God gives and sustains the Divine life.

This conception of the work of the Holy Spirit we find in the writings of St. Paul, as the following passages testify: "We received the Spirit which is of God." "Ye are a temple of God, and the Spirit of God dwelleth in you." "Ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you. But if any man hath not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness." It appears that here the Spirit of God in man, the Spirit of Christ in man, and Christ in man are to some extent identified. Distinction should, however, be drawn between the Spirit of God in man, which is equivalent to being spiritually acted on by God, and Christ in man, considered as the personal nature of the soul, such as is intended in the expression, "Christ being formed in man." "Sonship to God" in St. Paul's writings doubtless implies the Divine life in the soul, but is, more explicitly, the status of man in which God acts upon the soul through the Holy Spirit: "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are the sons of God. . . . Ye received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father." "And because ye are sons, God sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father."

But the doctrine of St. Paul is ambiguous, because he sometimes attributes to Christ what he elsewhere attributes to the Spirit. Once, indeed, he identifies the Twain: "The Lord is the Spirit." But there is this difference on the whole, that Christ represents rather the static in the Divine in relation to human redemption, whereas to the Spirit is assigned rather the action of the Divine both in God and in the soul. The Holy Spirit brings love, joy, strength, holiness, truth. Conversely, the Holy Spirit prays in men to God (Romans viii. 16, 26 ; Galatians iv. 6), and works in their faith and goodness (Galatians v. 5, 22).

According to the Fourth Gospel, the Spirit is to give the new life when Jesus has departed. The Spirit will come and make the believers in Christ founts of that water which shall quench the thirst of souls (vii. 37–39). The Holy Spirit is promised under the name of "Another Helper," who is to dwell with and in the disciples of Jesus. The coming of the Spirit is equivalent to the return "after a little while" of Jesus.

The experience upon which the idea of the Holy Spirit is based is communion with God. This was formerly just the sense of occasional inspiration. Under Christianity it is communion corresponding to the fact of Christ—communion, that is, of which the historical Christ is somehow a condition, and which is connected with having (it would seem) the nature of Christ. The Holy Spirit, be it remarked, is said to be operative, not only in the action of God upon souls, but also in the response of souls to God.

To a large extent the idea of Christ and the idea of the Holy Spirit are based upon the same religious experience—namely, the Divine life in man. But the former is based also on the historical record of the Gospel and its connection with the Divine life in man ; the latter on the Divine life especially in its form of spiritual intercourse with God and on the more active side of it. Ambiguity in the doctrine of the Spirit arises from variation in meaning of the name "Christ," since that sometimes includes to some extent the Holy Spirit, and also from the names "God" and "the Father" being sometimes used so as to comprise the Holy Spirit. The patristic theologians, finding three Divine Entities spoken of in Scripture as distinct, while the unity of God was at once scriptural and axiomatic, had no choice but to affirm the equal Divinity of all three Entities and a mysterious diversity and unity.

It will help to the elucidation of the doctrine of the Holy Trinity if we distinguish the relations of the Holy Spirit to Christ in the various meanings and references of the latter: (1) The Holy Spirit working in Jesus in the flesh; (2) the Holy Spirit in relation to Jesus in the flesh in the work of salvation; (3) the Holy Spirit in relation to the Christ dwelling in man; (4) the Holy Spirit in relation to Christ as the spiritual medium of the Christian; (5) the Holy Spirit proceeding from Jesus; (6) the Holy Spirit in relation to the Logos.

1. The Holy Spirit causes the birth of Jesus (Matthew i. 18, 20; Luke i. 35). Jesus receives from the Holy Spirit at His baptism power and wisdom for His life's work, and is afterwards guided by the Spirit (Matthew iv. 1). He applies to Himself Old Testament language about the prophet receiving power and authority from the Spirit of the Lord (Luke iv. 18, 19; cp. Mark xi. 28–33). His teaching is derived from God through the Spirit (John iii. 34). Peter indicates the significance of Jesus in the words, "God anointed Him with the Holy Spirit." The relation of the Spirit to Jesus in all this is of the same order, though in a higher degree, as the relation of the Spirit to any soul inspired and sanctified by God.

2. The relation of the Holy Spirit to the historical Christ in the work of salvation belongs to the doctrine of the Atonement ; but a brief explanation is here in place.

Jesus, through His teaching and career, has provided the external influence which puts men into the right condition for receiving spiritual influence direct from God—that is, for receiving the Holy Spirit. Unless Jesus had come, men would not have been so capable of receiving the Spirit ; unless Jesus had gone, men would not have felt to the same degree the need for the Spirit. In this way we can harmonise the saying of John the Baptist, that Jesus would baptize men with the Holy Ghost, with the saying of the Johannine Christ, that it was expedient for His disciples that He should depart, so that the Helper might come to them.

So, according to the Fourth Gospel, the Spirit is the invisible influence that makes men realise the truth of which Jesus was the visible representative: "The Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He shall teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I have said unto you." But more generally, the historical Christ serves to call forth in men that religious state of soul which conditions the action upon them of the Holy Spirit.

This is abundantly evidenced in the Acts of the Apostles. For the Holy Spirit was given only to those who acknowledged Jesus as Lord—that is, as the Emissary of God to give men the saving religion. Accordingly, the Holy Spirit fell on the disciples at Pentecost. And the method of evangelization seems to have been : first to preach Jesus as the Christ ;

then to require allegiance to Him through baptism; and then to pray to the Holy Spirit for the baptized. Once, indeed, it is recorded that the Spirit came upon some who had not been baptized (x. 44); but they had already, it must be supposed, given their allegiance to Christ in heart, and lacked only the formal admission into the Church.

The process of salvation is not so simple according to St. Paul. Faith in the crucified and risen Christ occasions mystical union with Christ, and so participation in His crucifixion and resurrection, and that issues in life in the Spirit of God. But in the actual mystical union with Christ, St. Paul thinks of the Spirit as operative, as we may judge from the manner in which he brings together Christ and the Spirit (Romans viii. 2, 9–11; 2 Corinthians iii. 16–18). The relation between the historical Christ and the Spirit in the work of salvation is still that the former calls forth the religious condition for the latter. But the work of the Spirit is twofold, according to St. Paul—namely, making the soul participate in Christ dying and rising, and being the fount of the ensuing spiritual life, with reference to which latter the name of the Spirit is more commonly used.

It is interesting in this connection to observe how St. Paul passes on from speaking of Jesus Christ in respect of His earthly career to speak of the Holy Spirit. Thus in 1 Corinthians ii. 2 he says he determined to preach only "Jesus Christ and Him crucified," but shortly afterwards proceeds to describe the revelation through the Spirit. In Romans iv. 24–v. 2 he speaks of justification through faith on account of the death and resurrection of Christ, and soon afterwards of the love of God that has been shed abroad through the Holy Spirit. In this light we may understand that salutation which has been regarded as an expression of the dogma of the Holy Trinity: "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all." The grace of forgiveness and admission to the favour of God is the grace won for men by Christ through His death; and thereby they experience the love of God, which is active in the operation of the Holy Spirit. The Trinity here implied is not that of the later ecclesiastical dogma, but it is, as we may call it, a Trinity of redemption.

3. The Holy Spirit causes the birth in the soul of the Divine life: "Expect a man be born anew" (or "from above"), "he cannot see the Kingdom of God. . . . Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." And the Divine life is Christ: "He that hath the Son hath the life." And the Holy Spirit causes the growth in the soul of the Divine life. For the working of the Spirit in the soul is the earnest of salvation (2 Corinthians i. 22; v. 5; Ephesians i. 14). And salvation involves Christ being formed in the soul.

The Holy Spirit also causes the early activity of the Divine life in the soul. Gradually, we may suppose, the Divine life comes to function of itself; but at first it is rather an instrument of the Holy Spirit, if we are to be guided by the expressions of religious experience. Yet an awakening new nature may seem to the ordinary consciousness not to be part of the self.

However, it is probable that the movements of the new-born spirit are controlled and directed from without more at first than later. This stage of being specially controlled and directed by the Holy Spirit seems to find expression in these passages of St. Paul: "God sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts crying, Abba, Father." "The Spirit Himself beareth witness with our Spirit that we are children of God." "And in like manner the Spirit also helpeth our infirmity: for we know not how to pray as we ought; but the Spirit Himself maketh intercession for us with unutterable groanings" (probably "groanings that cannot be put into words"); "and He that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, that He maketh intercession according to the will of God."

But in course of time the Spirit working in the soul seems to pass into the soul's spiritual nature acting for itself, as this passage indicates: "But unto us God revealed them" (the things prepared by God for them that love Him) "through the Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For who among men knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of the man, which is in him? Even so the things of God none knoweth, save the Spirit of God. But we received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us by God." The knowledge of the Spirit of God becomes the knowledge of man, through his partaking of the Spirit of God.

4. But not only is Christ in the soul, but the soul is in Christ: indeed, all religious activity is said to take place in Christ. This phraseology is almost peculiar to St. Paul among the writers in the New

Testament. Christians are one body in Christ, they die in Christ, triumph in Christ, speak in Christ, know in Christ. Christ is thus the spiritual atmosphere in which the regenerated live. Christ in this significance seems to be, partly at least, identical with the Spirit; only, Christ is rather the substance, and the Spirit is rather the activity, of this embracing life.

5. The Fourth Gospel has the appearance of having proceeded from one who had felt Jesus, whether in the flesh or after His departure, as a fount of spiritual influence. The teaching therein of mystical union of Jesus with His friends implies that He was this, as does also the account of the commission to the disciples after the Resurrection, in the words: "He breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost." But the Divine life as such must involve power to exercise spiritual influence; so that the Holy Spirit proceeds from all souls in whom Christ has been formed.

6. When Christ is regarded as the Power which, emanating from God, produces the World, Christ is identical with or includes the Holy Spirit. Thus at the beginning of the Fourth Gospel, where the Logos is spoken of as co-eternal with God and of the nature of God, no mention is made of the Spirit. We should also notice how small a part the Spirit plays in the theology of the First Epistle of John, having apparently only the function of revealing and witnessing to the truth of the salvation of man.

Somewhat different, but not unconnected, is St. Paul's identification of Christ and the Spirit: "Now the Lord is the Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. But we all, with unveiled face reflecting as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord the Spirit." St. Paul is arguing that when men turn to Christ they turn to the Spirit of God, who is all about them and is waiting to shine into their hearts and transform them into the image of Christ. The great spiritual Being which they thought of as Christ they find, when the veil is taken away, to be the Spirit of God. Accordingly the omnipresent Divine Power which sanctifies souls may be called either Christ or the Spirit.

That the Logos and the Spirit are one is evidenced by the fact that the theologians of the second and third centuries whose theorising centred round the Logos practically ignored the Spirit. Origen treats the Spirit as derived from the Son, as the Son from the Father, and assigns to Him the body of the sanctified—namely, the Church—as His special sphere. But this is rather artificial. A thoroughgoing Logos theology can find no place for a third Divine Person distinct both from the original Fount of Godhead and from the Logos.

What, then, is the Holy Spirit? The idea of the Holy Spirit we found to be the idea called up by the experience of communion with God. On the assumption which seems implicate in Christianity—namely, that through Christ man attains communion with God in His very essence—we must assent to the ecclesiastical dogma that the Holy Spirit is of the same essence as the other two Persons of the Godhead. In the words of Athanasius: "If the Holy Spirit were a creature, we could have no communion with God in Him."[1] The Holy Spirit is not to be considered a person (in the modern sense) distinct from God the Father and Christ. If occasionally (and it is only occasionally) the Spirit is so spoken of in Scripture, we must allow for the personificatory tendency of biblical language, seeing that death and sin are also spoken of as persons. Not, indeed, that the Holy Spirit is impersonal, in the sense of excluding personality. But as we found of the idea of Christ, so the idea of the Holy Spirit does not let itself be expressed in the terms of personality. Let us say that the Holy Spirit is God acting on souls spiritually. The Holy Spirit will then be personal (though not a person) in so far as God is personal.

---

[1] Athan. ad Serapionem, i. 23.

The Holy Spirit is God acting on souls spiritually. This definition would not allow for the use in the Old Testament, according to which the Spirit of God is active through inanimate nature ; but agrees with the use in the New Testament, according to which the Holy Spirit was not yet before Jesus was glorified (John vii. 39 ; cp. Acts xix. 2, R.V., margin), though, indeed, even spiritual action of God on men must surely have been before. According to patristic definition, the Holy Spirit is the love wherewith the Father loves the Son and the Son loves the Father. But the Son includes all souls in whom God is incarnate. The Holy Spirit is therefore the spiritual love of all beings whereby they have intercourse with one another. The Holy Spirit is the love that, proceeding from all, penetrates all and unites all.

The dogma of the Holy Trinity was the natural result of the attempt to relate the three Divine Entities —God, Christ, Spirit—which had been suggested by religious experience. Christ and the Spirit must be equally Divine with God, who is the Fount of all being, if human salvation is to be thorough ; and not separate from Him, that the unity of the Godhead be not impaired ; nor, again, merely aspects of God for human perception, else religion and with it human life would be largely illusory. This, then, may be considered the meaning of the dogma that God is Three Persons in One God. The Realities which man has come to know as God the Creator, Christ, the Holy Spirit, are, indeed, all equally Divine, form a unity, and yet are distinct. The dogma does not declare what precisely the Persons are, nor how they are united and yet separate, beyond the vague metaphysical description of consubstantial hypostases. It is, in fact, a symbol of the Divine, produced by intellect working on religious experience, and, being a symbol, it may be variously interpreted.

Each of the three Persons of the Holy Trinity is thought of as the origin of certain existences and experiences. The name of each is the centre, we may say, round which certain ideas cluster. Difficulty in clear interpretation of the dogma arises from the fact that the same ideas attach themselves sometimes to one Person and sometimes to another. Thus, to some the Heavenly Father seems to perform that function of loving Guardian which to others seems to belong to Christ, while, again, it might reasonably be ascribed to the Holy Spirit. To which Person of the Holy Trinity the different Divine activities are assigned depends on the intellect and on theological education. We should remark that the Heavenly Father as depicted by Jesus fulfils the functions of Christ and Holy Spirit. In the dogma, indeed, of the Holy Trinity the term "Father" has reference rather to the Son than to men. But as Jesus used the name, it implies that redeeming and that life-giving love which have been sometimes attributed rather to the Son of God and to the Spirit of God.

But the ideas and experiences at the root of the dogma seem to be these: God from whom all other existence has sprung and springs; a certain historical personage and career which constitutes the means in the physical order of existence whereby God draws men to Himself; the spiritual union of God and men which results. These three are essential to the Christian religion.

But these three elements do not constitute an eternal Trinity. For the career of Jesus Christ, having served to unite souls to God, will not be eternally needed to maintain the union (cp. 1 Corinthians xv. 28). And at one time souls were not in spiritual union with God. However, these three elements in Christianity do suggest eternal principles.

For we may think of God in the three main activities of His life—creating, redeeming, spiritual communion. These are, indeed, three stages in love—the love of putting forth souls for their good, the love of participating in their limitation and evil, the love of blissful union in a life the greater for the separation.

Another method of developing the doctrine of the Trinity from the three religious data—namely, the idea of the Creator, the history of Jesus, spiritual union and communion with the Divine—is to include in Christ the Divine life of humanity, which is called Christ dwelling in man, and is the result of the extension of the Incarnation throughout mankind. Christ, then, embraces the whole communion of the sanctified of the human race, since they all form one body. Or, again, the name Christ or God the Son may be made to stand for all the children of God on this globe and elsewhere. The Holy Trinity so considered consists of God, lesser Divine beings, the spiritual love which combines all into a loving unity. The Holy Trinity in this light represents the goal of the operation of God, the purpose animating the whole process of the Universe—namely, lesser beings living in spiritual union with God.

Thus the doctrine of the Holy Trinity symbolises the truth of the Universe considered as purposive and growing. It is a formula of love, the Love which proceeds from creation through redemption to communion, the Love which labours for the union of God and souls in Love.

But in doing so, the doctrine of the Holy Trinity symbolises also the Eternal. The Eternal is such as to comprise within Itself purpose and growth. The Eternal Love fulfils Itself in Love working and developing and coming to blissful fruition.

So Christianity, being true religion, produced the doctrine of the One God in Three Persons, which symbolises the ultimate truth of Reality.

## CHAPTER V.

# SIN

WE found three main stages in conscious life, which we denote by these names—perceptual, mental, spiritual; to which these seem roughly equivalent—animal, human, Divine. The mental seems to plant itself in the perceptual and develop until it is fit soil for the spiritual. But the development does not proceed directly and steadily to its goal. There occur wrong developments, which have to be undone. The perversion arising from wrong development in the mental nature in its attitude towards good and evil is called "sin."

The word "sin," with its equivalents in other languages, was originally applied to the wrong act rather than to the state of the soul from which the act proceeds. But the increasing sense of the importance of personality has drawn attention more to the sinful disposition.

Sin presents a variety of aspects—intemperance in the pursuit of the objects of animal desires, transgression (or the disposition to transgression) of the laws of the community, rebellion against God, life and aims contrary to the ideal lines of human development, selfishness, a moral and religious disposition unsuited to the spiritual life. Sin in its widest sense includes immorality; in its narrower, as a religious malady, it is wrong attitude of the personality to God; in its specifically Christian sense it is a condition of the soul inimical to spiritual life.

Our subject will fall under four main heads: the origin of sin, the nature of sin, the abolition of sin, original sin. The first two divisions interpenetrate: in considering the origin of sin we shall consider sin in its aspect of intemperance; in dealing with the other main aspects of sin we shall be tracing the origin of its more essential nature.

First, how does sin come into being?

The attribution of sin to free-will does not solve the question. For freedom in its highest form does not appear to involve the likelihood of doing wrong. Rather is perfect freedom that of the perfect will which consistently does and is right. It cannot, then, be freedom as such which occasions wickedness.

Or is sin due to the influence of devils? It is difficult to estimate the truth conveyed by the biblical idea of evil spirits. We must allow for the personification natural to primitive thought, so that evil tendencies might be conceived as malignant personalities.[1] But whether there be or be not devils, and whatever be their origin, and however great their influence on mankind, some beings must have become bad of themselves. And we want to know how this happened.

---

[1] F. W. Myers wrote, with reference to the evidence from psychical research for devils: "Perhaps the most striking part of this negative evidence is the absence, in well-attested cases, of any mention of evil spirits other than human. The belief in devils has played an enormous part in almost all human creeds, and it was undoubtedly strong in the minds of many of the persons with whom communication has been held. Unhappy figures have been seen; regret and remorse have been expressed. But of evil spirits other than human there is no news whatever" ("Human Personality," vol. ii., p. 203).

Or is sin, after all, not wrong development, but only an inferior stage of development? But sensual vice is destructive of health and beauty and strength. It makes a man worse than a savage and even, in a sense, than a brute beast.

It seems, then, that sin is a perversion of the mental nature which inevitably befalls it as it develops. Accordingly, we should grasp the tendency of the development of the mental nature, so as to understand how sin comes into being.

Let us, then, briefly consider the beginning and the end of the process of the development of the mental nature. We will suppose, as the starting-point, a state of innocence with a low degree of conceptual consciousness, such as might belong to barbarian races, who seem capable of continuing in nearly the same condition almost indefinitely. We can perceive two main essential differences between such a state of primitive innocence and the ideal perfection of the mental nature.

The life in the state of innocence is adapted to a certain place in the World, and is in harmony with natural forces, which are modes of Divine activity. This fitness of the individual to his place in the World is determined by the nature and mutual relations of the activities which make up his life. If he is to live healthily, he must eat and drink and sleep as his natural instincts prescribe. But though the satisfaction of his bodily desires is accomplished through the conscious agency of the person, the part played by each act of satisfying an impulse lies outside his ken. Each impulse is satisfied as it arises, but the state of body which stimulates the appetites and the plan of life which gives each its place do not enter into the mind at this stage. The subject does not eat in order to nourish his body or rest in order to repair the waste occasioned by work ; still less could he be aware of what determines the proportion of sleep to food required for health ; but he eats and rests simply in response to the feelings of hunger and fatigue. The hunger and fatigue not being the same as deficiency in nutriment and accumulation of waste materials in the body, he cannot be said to act with the purpose of remedying these defects. He acts in the desire (or feeling of want), which is a psychical state of himself, becoming the satisfaction, which is another psychical state. The transition from desire to satisfaction involves bodily movements, and the bodily movements become by association themselves objects of desire ; but the immediate cause of their becoming this is that they are the means to the satisfaction of the desires, not that they have a vital effect on the organism.[1]

His desires and actions, then, are such as to keep his body in harmony with natural forces, and so with the Divine order ; but this life in harmony with the Divine order is not actually willed by him. But a

---

[1] The relation of desire to pleasure has been a subject fertile of psychological controversy. The theory known as psychological hedonism is that desire has for its object pleasure. Against this it has been argued (notably by Bishop Butler and T. H. Green) that since the pleasure arises only from the satisfaction, the desire is prior to the thought of the pleasure. To the pessimistic school of thought desire is inherently painful, and pleasure arises from the alleviation of pain.

Perhaps it would be truer to say that a desire is an incomplete psychical state which tends towards completion. The appetites and pleasures are not joined together anyhow. Rather does the succeeding pleasure include the desire. This is more evident in the faculties completely rational being would be conscious of the principle of his life and of the union of himself, through that principle, with the Divine order ; while all habits and actions would be consequences of that principle. In that state desires would be voluntarily and consciously determined in accordance with the needs of the person as a whole in his place in the Divine order.

But the life of the completely rational being would have also a different kind of content and be animated by a different kind of principle from the content and principle of a life just at the commencement of human evolution. The acts of the savage, for instance, are directed towards the bodily preservation and welfare of himself, his family, and, perhaps, his tribe ; but the acts of the completely rational being would be directed towards the preservation and enhancement of the best kind of life, bodily, mental, and spiritual, of all conscious beings whom he could affect. Now in virtue of this principle of willing the best of all, such a soul would be akin to God.

The state of innocence is one of unconscious harmony with natural forces, and accordingly is not one of sin or opposition to the will of God, at least so far as that will expresses itself in the forces of Nature. On the other hand, it is not a state of goodness, which is

of the mental nature. An unfinished poem or picture or sonata gives a sense of dissatisfaction which is removed through its completion. A desire, then, we may suppose, is an incomplete psychical state which becomes completed in the satisfaction. Since certain bodily movements are required before a desire can be completed, it will tend to give rise to these movements. And so the movements may become objects of desire. But the primary object is that which the desire tends to become, namely, the satisfaction or pleasure. The pleasure is not desired because it is just a pleasure, but because it is the complete psychical state of which the desire is an incomplete state.

conscious and purposive life in harmony with the will of God as that will is at the source and centre. Therefore for man to develop out of the state of primitive innocence into the state of rational life he must undergo two changes: he must gain conscious control of his life so as to perform his various actions in view of one main principle and purpose, instead of willing each separately for an isolated end; secondly, the principle itself must reflect the will of God as regards the full life of humanity, instead of comprising only the appetites of the lower life of Nature in himself and a few others. In this passage from innocence to rationality sin comes into being. Can we discover the cause and manner of its origin?

The mental force which is to shape itself into a living rational nature is at first without proper content. It is only the potentiality of wisdom and goodness. Hence it makes its first objects among the contents of the lower order of consciousness, in which it finds itself. It concerns itself with the desires and satisfactions of the bodily senses.

The pleasures of the appetites thus become the objects of cogitation and deliberate purpose. The mind seeks to extend and increase them beyond what is usual. The good to which thought and volition are directed is more continuous and intense animal pleasure. Such is the origin and such the nature of intemperance or vice; and intemperance is sin in that it is a use of the rational will which is contrary to the Divine will operative in the World. And this antagonism manifests itself in the destruction of bodily health which is consequent on the disproportionate increase of certain bodily functions and the unnatural excitation of certain nerve-centres. We do not need to go back to prehistoric epochs to verify this account of the origin of vice. The natural and healthy child who becomes corrupted through the eager quest of increased pleasure is an instance of the fall of man. It is mostly children of high spirits and quick imagination that are in danger of developing into sensualists ; for their restless intellects and wills are in constant quest of some satisfying object, while they lack the intellectual and moral and æsthetic taste and also the steadiness and breadth of view that would cause them to seek higher and more lasting goods. The feeling of depression that is characteristic of the sensualist, which he seeks to alleviate through narcotics and stimulants, indicates a mental and nervous energy which is in lack of an object on which to expend itself. For this feeling, as the name suggests, is due to the vitality which is, so to speak, pressed down through having no outlet.

The mental energy would be stimulated and developed through a man's struggle with Nature and his fellow-men. But when he finds himself, with this increased power, relieved of the necessity of fighting or working very hard, he will seek for other objects of interest. And since the animal wants and their satisfactions are the most constantly recurring and exciting experiences, the mental energy will naturally direct itself largely upon these.

Another instinct which provides material for the growing mental energy is acquisitiveness, which is found in several animal species. In certain respects this is more satisfactory. The pleasures connected with the appetites are for the most part brief and occasional, whereas a possession lasts continuously.

And possessions can be accumulated, so that the sum of supposed good may be increased indefinitely. Furthermore, in the acquisition and contemplation of possessions there is commonly more scope for the exercise of intellect than in the pursuit of sensuous pleasures.

None the less, avarice is a very serious sin, though its destructiveness is less immediately apparent than that of sensuality. For it puts the man in antagonism to his fellow-creatures, and so in antagonism to the will of God operative in humanity, and also prevents the growth of the personality in more desirable directions.

Out of intemperance and avarice springs hatred. Animals fight, and, it may be presumed, hate one another. But the hatred and quarrelling of human beings are not merely survivals from a pre-human or a pre-civilized condition; they assume monstrous proportions and are more intelligent and purposive. For augmented desires bring a man into fierce conflict with his neighbours. He may have the means of satisfying all his normal appetites and wishes; yet, just because his mental energy has no sufficient outlet, even in his intemperance and avarice he suffers intense irritation at small limitations to his pleasures and wealth. His mental energy being concentrated on a narrow field of objects and working along a few paths, one tract in his mind becomes inflamed. He is a prey to continual uneasiness, as a vigorous man confined within a small space; and this uneasiness becomes torment whenever one of the small existing outlets is blocked; and this gives rise to fierce anger and hatred against the will which opposes him. We are not wont to blame a poor man who is struggling for the means of life on the ground that he has few thoughts except for his own welfare or for that of his family. In him self-interest may prevail, but it hardly becomes selfishness, which is the concomitant to hatred. For this we must look rather to the prosperous and leisured among mankind, who, just on account of their prosperity and the resulting leisure, develop passions of greed and envy, which are morbid states of the soul. It is these who take the poor man's lamb and rob Naboth of his vineyard, even procuring the death of the possessors that they may acquire their possessions.

But there is another class of sins, which is associated not so much with man's strength as with his weakness, namely, sins of deceit. They arise from the effort of the person to satisfy his desires, when they are likely to be hindered or provoke attack by his fellows. These desires may be either bad in themselves or bad relatively to the morality of the community ; and so deceit may be the effect either of intemperance or of certain members of a community being at a considerably lower stage of moral development than that represented by the moral principles of the community.

In lying a man tries to accomplish his purposes through the reliance of others on a social morality which he transgresses ; for he is able to deceive because others trust that he is moral enough to speak the truth. The motives of lying may be various, some of them good. Its justifiability on occasion is a question of ethics. But generally it is sin, in that it destroys the harmony of rational purpose in which human beings should live.

Different from this is hypocrisy or pretence to goodness. This may be due either in the main to grave immorality, which it is sought to hide, or else rather to the mind and character being yet at a low level of development in morality and religion, while the community demands a comparatively high level. The man tries to adjust himself to his moral and religious environment. But the adjustment is not complete; it is superficial and formal.

The artificial correspondence with the Divine will results in morbidity in the soul. For health of soul may be said to consist in mutual harmony of its parts and various activities, and in there being sufficient psychic force for every action, and the actions being sufficient outlets for the psychic force. But in hypocrisy the outward and the inner life are at variance, with the consequence that there is insufficient psychic force for the outward life, and probably insufficient outlet for the psychic force in the inner life. The outward life, therefore, becomes forced and unnatural, while there may be a fever of avarice or some other passion in the man's heart, which is apt to break out in unexpected ways. The hypocrite is constantly doing what is irksome to him—for instance, acting with courtesy and forbearance—and is prevented from doing what he would find most pleasure in, except on those occasions when he is secure from observation. Consequently he tends to hate those towards whom he is constrained to act morally, and also the virtues and religion he is constrained to practise, and to long for freedom to gratify his bad inclinations.

We may pass to the second main division of our subject—the nature of sin. In our inquiry into the origin of sin we have contemplated it as disease of the soul—intemperance being excess in certain conative processes and hypocrisy being mal-adjustment and conflict in the life. We have to treat of sin in its other main aspects, and first in the aspect of transgression of law or disposition to transgress law.

Since man is a social being, his activity has to be kept in check. Especially is the extravagant pursuit of the objects of animal wants apt to harm the other members of the community. Wherefore the community is obliged to restrain the activity of the individual by means of punishment and threat of punishment. And so the idea of wrong comes into being ; immorality first becomes known as immorality, and in being so known becomes true wickedness or intentional antagonism to the right. This is practically in accordance with St. Paul's assertion : "Until the law sin was in the world, but sin is not imputed when there is no law." It is not, however, the actual morbid development of soul which is first known as wrong, but certain deeds which arise out of it, namely, those which in certain marked ways injuriously affect other members of the community. Immorality, then, is first conceived as immorality when certain immoral actions injurious to a society are forbidden by the society under pain of punishment. A few more points deserve notice.

In the first place, it is not only perversions of nature, but also certain normal consequences of the natural instincts that the community forbids. Although, no doubt, the worst sin is purposive effort of an unnatural kind, yet the mere permission to the normal appetites to have their way as in a pre-human state of life counts as wrong.[1] For the animal nature must be controlled and refashioned in the interests of the mental life, of which morality is a main part. For instance, the laws of marriage and property are intended to restrict the free satisfaction of animal wants. Up to a certain point failure to control the desires may be due merely to the fact that the person has not attained to a certain level of moral development ; but where the mental force is strong, this failure may argue selfishness and disrespect towards a better life, and so actual immorality. But, in any case, to give rein to the normal wants of the animal nature is a transgression of law. This, moreover, must be added : unless certain appetites are controlled, sensuality will inevitably arise. For mankind in the earlier period of their growth are in a condition of grave instability. Unless they develop in morality, they will become monstrosities of immorality. Still more, perhaps, must decline from morality bring with it vicious indulgence. Reversion to type is followed by perversion of type.

---

[1] Not but what there are instinctive habits of restriction even among animals.

Secondly, immorality when forbidden by law imposed by a primitive community appears in its characters both of offence against others and of offence against God. For religion is very early, if not from the first, connected with the tribe. The tribe is believed to be the property or the family of a deity, so that any injury to the tribe would be counted as injury to the deity of the tribe. Also, owing to the sense of the solidarity of the tribe one member's offence against the deity might draw from the deity punishment on the tribe as a whole.

Thirdly, primitive moral law is mainly negative. In the Hebrew Ten Commandments of those dealing with a man's conduct towards his fellows only that which bears on family life is positive. This indicates that the business of primitive moral law was rather to prevent immorality than to direct the moral development of the soul. In fact, while law can have much avail in checking immorality through punishment, it can do little directly to foster moral goodness. An attempt to do so by means of rewards and punishments would tend to encourage an artificial and formal morality. When the morality of not harming is fulfilled (that is, completed) in the morality of service and love, law has really ceased to exist (*vide* Matthew v. 17 and foll.; Romans xiii. 10).

But more specifically, sin is a disease of the religious nature. It is as such the contrary of the right religious attitude to God, consisting in indifference, mistrust, irreverence, rebellion, as opposed to yearning, trust, reverence, faith that works through love.[1] In its extreme form it shows itself as blasphemy. More commonly it is a general temper of worldliness in place of a religious temper, together with shyness of religion and religious ideas, which is liable on occasion to grow into dislike. It is this, more than immorality, which is inimical to any saving operation of God on the soul. But it grows out of immorality—immorality in the widest sense—namely, excessive regard for and pursuit of the objects of the appetites and lower desires; for, this manner of life being felt to be inconsistent with obedience to the will of God, religion is avoided or even abhorred. But, indeed, higher religion from its very nature demands absolute devotion of the life and self to the Divine, and so is incompatible with any search for happiness which is not related to the Divine.

---

[1] *Vide* Ritschl, "Justification and Reconciliation," vol. iii., p. 383, English trans.: "Sin, which alike as a mode of action and as a habitual propensity extends over the whole human race, is, in the Christian view of the world, estimated as the opposite of reverence and trust towards God."

In the words of Jesus: "No man can serve two masters. . . . Ye cannot serve God and Mammon."[1]

The highest degree of sin under this aspect is hatred of God, in particular, of His operation in saving souls. But to acknowledge that one hates God and the operations of God is to confess oneself in the wrong and in danger of Divine punishment. Consequently, a man with a disposition in violent opposition to the Divine deludes himself as to what is the Divine; so that when Divine goodness appears he is wont to maintain that it is evil. When the perception of good and evil has been thus perverted, he resists the saving influences of God. This is the condition which Jesus stigmatises as inner darkness (Luke xi. 34–6), which issues in blasphemy against the Holy Spirit (Mark iii. 29, 30). He was provoked to speak of this sin by His opponents attributing to Satan His own good works, which were done in the power of God. An analogous state of delusion might, however, occur where there was little or no religious reference in the estimation of right and wrong.

---

[1] This teaching of Jesus impels us to inquire how family affection and strong interest in science and art may be compatible with such religion as He demanded. And, indeed, we should observe that, according to the record, Jesus did call on men to hate father and mother and wife and children (Luke xiv. 26). Yet one would hesitate to say that parents devoted to their children are necessarily unchristian.

With regard to family affection, we should remember that love for men is enjoined by Jesus, and appears in His teaching as a necessary consequence of love for God. And love for men may reasonably be especially directed towards those with whom one is naturally in closest contact. Still, very exclusive love for kindred is no doubt a sin, the more so when it causes unkindness towards others. It is to be also observed that the best love may even work in opposition to the wish of the loved, in leading them to a nobler life.

With regard to science and art, they may be pursued at the cost of being callous to the needs of one's fellows. On the other hand, they may be permeated with religion and humane feeling, and be motived by true love for God and man, and as such they will tend to be truer and nobler science and art.

But generally in this question, we should remark that the compatibility of any interest or pursuit with service to God is to be measured by the quality of soul which it promotes. Money-making is antagonistic to the highest religion because it cramps the soul and dulls its sensibilities to higher things; human affection and the quest for truth and beauty expand the soul and quicken its sensibilities to higher things. Accordingly these latter, though not at first religious, prepare the soul for a religious life, in which they may remain, being sanctified and infused by love for God.

We now pass to a non-religious view of sin—life and aims contrary to the ideal of human development. The supreme ethical end we may define as the best quality of personalities attainable. This seems to include development of both body and soul in a number of primary faculties. One-sided development, especially when carried to the point at which it disturbs the balance of the whole, is to be regarded as bad. It would seem, then, to be a duty to aim at the growth of man, individually as well as collectively, in physical health and power, and in intellect and moral character and artistic perception, and, we may add, in religion and in spirit. Sin would, under this aspect, consist in action and disposition antagonistic to such growth.

But since man is a social being, we must especially emphasise altruism as desirable and egoism as sinful. The tendency to aim at one's own good with disregard for the good of others is irrational, since rational will, being objective, must devote itself to the realisation of good impartially. And much more good can be attained through co-operation with a view to the good of all, and that, largely because altruistic action causes the agent to grow in goodness of character—particularly in love—and in other respects. Hence selfishness appears as the worst of sins.

We may observe that naturalistic humanitarianism has its standard of conduct and character, and, indeed, no mean ideal of goodness, in reference to which certain behaviour is judged as sinful. Not merely sensuality and avarice and malice, but indolent and comfortable living in the face of the needs of others, and even one-sided devotion to branches of science and art of inconsiderable benefit socially, may be counted by this humanitarianism as grievous wickedness. Nay, more ; failure to act on occasion with courageous self-sacrifice may be condemned. The ideal at its highest is, indeed, the supreme Christian ideal, except for difference in the latter due to the transcendental element ; and the corresponding offences are, with this limitation, also the same. Surely a faithful allegiance to the humanitarian ideal and steadfast abhorrence of sins against it prepares effectively for spiritual life.

Selfishness is a fundamental sin—it may seem even the worst—also under the aspect of sin as antagonism to God and under the aspect of sin as condition of soul inimical to spiritual life. For religion involves acceptance of the will of God for human beings, namely, that they should serve one another in love ; and the spiritual requires goodness of the soul both in its relation to other souls and in its relation to God. In the earlier stage of human development sin appears less in the form of selfishness, since control of the appetites and desires and obedience to law are then the primary requisites. As self-interest produces control of the lower nature, and as through the growth of the mind it becomes more possible to put oneself in another's place, so does unselfishness become more feasible, and also necessary if the soul is not to become degraded. Yet unselfishness and selfishness can at no stage be regarded as just equivalents for goodness and sin, since the kind of goods given or withheld must be taken into account. Still, perhaps, in the higher stages of mental development unselfishness and selfishness constitute respectively the most important elements in goodness and badness.

It remains to consider the sense of sin connected with the experience of spiritual regeneration. This is a sense of separation from God, of being corrupt and utterly unworthy to have fellowship with God, even with a remorse and self-loathing that suggest Hell. The following may serve as examples of this :—

1. "I flung myself down under a fig-tree, and gave my tears free course ; and the floods of mine eyes broke forth, an acceptable sacrifice in Thy sight. And I cried unto Thee incessantly, not in these words, but to this purpose, 'And Thou, O Lord, how long? How long, O Lord, wilt Thou be angry for ever? O remember not our iniquities of old times.' For I felt that I was held fast by them, and I went on wailing, 'How long, how long? to-morrow and to-morrow? Why not now? Why not this hour make an end of my vileness?'"[1]

2. "My original and inward pollution, that was my plague and my affliction. By reason of that, I was more loathsome in my own eyes than was a toad ; and I thought I was so in God's eyes too. Sin and corruption, I said, would as naturally bubble out of my heart as water would bubble out of a fountain. I could have changed heart with anybody. I thought none but the Devil himself could equal me for inward wickedness and pollution of mind. 'Sure,' thought I,

---

[1] "Confessions of St. Augustine," book viii., chap. 12, trans. by C. Bigg.

'I am forsaken of God'; and thus I continued a long while, even for some years together."[1]

3. "Everything I saw seemed to be a burden to me; the earth seemed accursed for my sake: all trees, plants, rocks, hills, and vales seemed to be dressed in mourning, and groaning under the weight of the curse, and everything around me seemed to be conspiring my ruin. My sins seemed to be laid open; so that I thought that every one I saw knew them, and sometimes I was almost ready to acknowledge many things, which I thought they knew: yea, sometimes it seemed to me as if every one was pointing me out as the most guilty wretch upon earth. I had now so great a sense of the vanity and emptiness of all things here below, that I knew the whole world could not possibly make me happy, no, nor the whole system of creation. When I waked in the morning, the first thought would be, 'Oh, my wretched soul, what shall I do, where shall I go?' and when I laid down, would say, 'I shall be perhaps in hell before morning.'"[2]

As this sense of sin is commonly followed by a sense of salvation, it is to be suggested that it is due to the Holy Spirit working on the soul. Perhaps, at least in its most acute form, it is a feeling of the spiritual nature in respect of the corruption of the soul which hinders its health and growth. The spiritual nature, let us say, feels horror and hatred of that in the moral and religious condition of the mental nature which tends to choke and poison it. If this be so, it is understandable that the sense of sin is for some a precondition of regeneration, and also cannot be felt without the grace of God, which is the working of the Holy Spirit.

---

[1] John Bunyan, quoted by Prof. W. James in "Varieties of Religious Experience," p. 158.

[2] Henry Alline, quoted *ibid.*, p. 159.

Preachers who aim at leading men to conversion commonly try to induce first a moral and religious awareness of sin. This, combined with longing for salvation, conditions the soul for the working of the Holy Spirit. Then, when the Spirit begins to work, engendering spiritual life, the ego through this embryo of the new life experiences a true spiritual sense (or "conviction") of sin, with unspeakable horror and self-loathing, which exceeds in intensity and is different in quality from the merely moral and mentally religious sense of sin. This is presently succeeded by the flooding of the soul with the Holy Spirit, and the triumphant emergence into health and security of the spiritual nature.

We should add that the abolition of sin is not commonly complete at once. The evil influence is overcome at the moment of conversion, but it is some time before it is totally eradicated; and the sense of sin may even return, though in a weaker form. In some the conflict with sin is much prolonged, during which time the intense loathing and horror of the soul at its own condition frequently recurs.

But all is not yet decided. Is sin a disease of the mental nature only, or is it in its supreme form a disease of the spiritual? Is the spiritual necessarily good; or may there be some truth in the conception of spiritual evil which the ideas of the Devil and evil spirits seem to symbolise? Or, at least, may not a perverted mental nature somewhat pervert the spiritual which is rooted in it? If that be so, one would incline to suppose that it is only through contact with a perverted lower nature that the Divine and spiritual can become itself perverted.

But whatever be the truth of this, sin presents itself as the supreme evil of the Universe, and the conflict of the spiritual with sin as the supreme conflict. Perhaps, too, the agony which is undergone by a soul in this conflict with sin, whether in himself or in others, is at its height the supreme agony, surpassing the utmost physical torture, the intensest mental misery.

We now proceed to inquire how sin is overcome and character rightly developed. The extirpation of sin takes place, at least in general, through development in the soul of disposition in antagonism to it. A sin, being a disposition of soul, is strengthened by sinful acts and produces sinful acts. It therefore tends to endure and to increase. But it is wont to provoke antagonism from other parts of the personality. And this antagonism, gathering strength, may ere long produce contrary inclinations sufficient to check the sin. A sin, being a disposition of soul, tends to endure and to increase, but not having the dominion of all the soul, it may be resisted and extirpated. Now sin may affect the personality more or less deeply. It varies from morbid development of appetites to perverted attitude of will and reason and emotion towards high principles and values. The more the inner nature is affected, the more radical is the change required.

In the main, the reformative process is due in the earlier stages to the evil nature becoming apparent both to the subject and to his fellows, and the mental energy in consequence seeking other outlets. Sins may even assist to conquer each other, as, for instance, avarice may fight against sensuality. We must also allow for the destruction by natural selection of stock which is liable to certain forms of immorality, alcoholism, for example, being said to be cured in a nation largely through the early death of those affected. But the education of the moral sense of the community through the horrible experiences that result from vice has probably very much to do with the improvement.

Abhorrence of immorality comes from association of ideas. Like as a child or animal, having been hurt through touching a flame, afterwards, when moving to touch a flame, has an impulse to shrink, which is painful if resisted, so does man, having experienced the evil consequences of immorality, feel horror at the suggestion to practise immorality. But with the advance of intelligence the avoidance of immorality is produced also through reasoned expectation of the consequent evil. Where there is little feeling of abhorrence, a strong effort of will may be required to resist temptation. But the feeling of abhorrence naturally follows, and by degrees the illicit desire decreases.

We may now trace this process in more detail. One who makes his direct interest and aim the gratification of animal appetites is liable to find himself a prey to uneasiness, which is assuaged only during the brief and occassional enjoyment of his pleasures. And even these pleasures tend to become less keen, so that the voluptuary recurs to them not so much for their own sake as to still his sense of inquietude and irritation. And then his health and strength are found to be impaired, and he has become repulsive in bodily appearance. Now although the voluptuary himself may not recover, his history acts strongly as a deterrent to others who are inclined to indulge in animal pleasures. Not only do they come to fear the result of vice, but the sensual indulgence itself through association of ideas will seem beastly to them. A later stage is that devotion to certain pleasures is seen to be in itself a degradation of man's higher nature, and is therefore horrible, apart from its consequences.

Thus, the evil of the immorality, becoming apparent, checks the immorality directly. But it also works indirectly. Certain vices result in injurious behaviour on the part of the subject towards his fellows in the community. Lust, for instance, will lead to various forms of crime. In punishing and threatening punishment to these crimes the community helps to check the disposition which issues in them. Moreover, as the moral sensibility becomes keener, manifested dislike and contempt for the vicious is a very effective agency in checking vice.

As a third class of influences remedial of immorality may be counted the religious. Misfortune is apt to appear as punishment from the invisible personalities from whom men are believed to derive their life, and the more so when it follows certain behaviour with regularity. And since the deities are conceived as good, the behaviour displeasing to them is regarded as wicked. Furthermore, in the primitive condition of man there is commonly such a sense of the solidarity of a tribe, that the offence of one is thought likely to call down Divine punishment on the rest, unless they forestall the punishment. Then again, since at death the soul is believed to come into closer relations to the deities, the sinner may expect still severer punishment when he dies. And this expectation is reinforced by the apparent escape of certain flagrant sinners in the present life.

Avarice, a vice belonging to a slightly higher stage of human development, meets a no less inevitable, if tardier, check. For inordinate amassing of possessions brings the man into conflict with his neighbours. It may even induce crimes the punishment for which prevents or hinders the enjoyment of his wealth. Apart from that, it engenders ill-feeling and isolates the man from human fellowship. And it commonly ruins the mental health through unnatural excitement and strain ; and the mental ill-health together with luxurious living impairs the bodily health also. Then in the reflection induced by the ensuing misery there is apt to arise the thought that all the labour is rendered useless by death, except in so far as the man desires the prosperity of his heirs. And this consideration may also occur, that since wealth only serves for the provision of necessities and comforts, labour to provide more than what is sufficient for these purposes is useless trouble. And others will be struck by the cruelty to which avarice leads and the unfairness of the unequal distribution and the selfishness implied.

The growing mental energy, diverted from these objects, will seek others. An immense field, in fact, lies open to it. Almost any occupation, so long as it seems to lead to a result of considerable usefulness, may attract the mental energy, and, if the energy, both mental and physical, be abundant, it may be pursued with delight. And activities originally undertaken with a view to an end may with practice become so habitual and harmonious as to be enjoyable ; though, indeed, one can hardly enjoy them for long without some sort of purpose, real or imagined. Thought and knowledge afford one class of desirable objects and enjoyable activities. The contemplation and reproduction of beauty, the physical senses and interest in human life coalescing in this, afford another. Pity and hatred of injustice stir eager endeavour to succour the wretched and right the wrong. In this way small and weak instincts and feelings grow great and powerful, and so afford wide fields for the expenditure of that mental energy which otherwise engenders immorality. But the mental life, thus better directed, prepares the soul for the spiritual life. And the World is so ordered that human life must develop rightly at last.

This may serve as an outline of the progressive elimination of immorality and sin, and the growth of man's moral nature. The influences which direct this development culminate in the Atonement. That we may regard as the means for accomplishing the final stage of the process of deliverance from sin and growth in righteousness. Still, the whole human race does not grow together, nor, indeed, one human individual. Consequently men are yet struggling and learning by bitter experience in earlier stages, although the final stage has been already touched.

But there is one fact of immense importance in the evolution of man—namely, the discontinuity through death and birth in the evolving entity. It is well known that habits once strongly formed are hardly to be eradicated in a lifetime. And the victim of immorality commonly does not appreciate the evil of it. Besides, vice works terrible havoc with the health and sanity of a man. Now the yet unperverted and uncorrupted new generation can judge more impartially of the nature and effects of certain kinds of conduct as exhibited in the former generation, and profit by their example. This is, as it were, the vicarious punishment of the tendencies of self-indulgence in the young. It is true, indeed, that there may be an inheritance of evil customs and moral tone.

But it is often possible for the youthful to free themselves from that before they become corrupted. Furthermore, one race or class can profit by the example of another race or class which is dying out.

It is because of death and birth that immorality and sin can never get a firm hold on the race. However firm their hold on individuals, these individuals will be succeeded by other individuals, who will start fresh, and take warning by the physical and moral hideousness and hatefulness, the misery and premature death of those who preceded them. The continual destruction and renewal of the race by death and birth continually restore that health and plasticity which condition progress. The race renews itself in such a way that it can profit by the past without being bound to the evil of the past. The succeeding generations are the dead selves which the race uses as stepping-stones to higher things. Death is a great instrument of Providence for the deliverance of humanity from the consequences of its misdeeds and mistakes.

The human race is the subject of a mighty process —the development of mind in preparation for the coming of spirit. This development is by no means even, but proceeds through frequent perversions of various kinds, which bring about their own remedy. But, indeed, the human race which so develops is apparently no one thing. The fact rather is that there is continuous replacement of individuals by individuals, the condition of the individuals at any one time being largely determined by the condition of the individuals at previous times. The human race resembles a wave of the sea, which is a succession of similar and continuously changing masses of water. The actual particles of water are different every few seconds; the actual individuals of the human race are different every few years. The process is one and continuous; the subject is ever changing. Nay, more; the process is able to go on just because the subject changes. The changing of the individuals by death and birth is a condition of the evolution of the race.

This is not the place to attack the question of the survival of the individual and immortality, or the question of the relation of the development and salvation of the individual to the development and salvation of the race. But let it be here remarked that if death conditions the development of the race through breaking connection with the past, it is probable that, if there be personal immortality, death likewise conditions the development of the soul. And it may do so in this way. Many evil propensities owe their power largely to modification of the body produced by immoral behaviour, paths for nervous energy having been created, till bad desires and acts have become almost reflex. Also evil habits may be much involved in certain persons and things. Now when the soul is severed from the body, much power of action and perception and memory may perish. Even if a measure of evil disposition remains it is without its physical basis and most of its field of activity, so that it will become weak through want of nourishment and exercise. At the same time, we might suppose that the life would be sufficiently continuous for the good and evil development of the lifetime not to be wholly lost. Thus would death perform a like function in both race and individual, that of partial severance from the past, so that a fresh start would be possible without total loss of the growth accomplished and the value of the experience undergone. In the race not all the growth is accomplished nor all the needful experience undergone in one lifetime. Can we think that the growth and experience of one lifetime could be sufficient for the soul?

We now pass to consider original sin. The doctrine, as it appears in the writings of Augustine, may be briefly summarised: All human beings—except, of course, Jesus Christ—are born with a sinful disposition called "original sin," which, apart from Divine grace, necessarily issues in actual sin. Original sin is also original guilt. It is transmitted from Adam and Eve through the process of generation.[1] The transmission occurs even in the regenerate.[2] Adam sinned of his free-will, and all men—according to the Latin version of St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans, v. 12—sinned in Adam, so that all are guilty.[3] And so the sin of men in their lifetime follows necessarily as the first punishment for their sin in Adam,[4] the ultimate punishment being eternal death. Another punishment and consequence of original sin, according to Holy Scripture, is physical death.

---

[1] Quapropter quisquis humanam contendit in qualibet aetate naturam non indigere medico secundo Adam, quia non est vitiata in primo Adam, non in aliqua quæstione in qua dubitari vel errari salva fide potest, sed in ipsa regula fidei qua Christiani sumus, gratiæ Dei convincitur inimicus ("De Peccato Originali," § 34).

[2] Reatus itaque vitii ejus de quo loquimur, in regeneratorum prole carnali tamdiu manebit, donec et illic lavacro regenerationis abluatur. Regeneratus quippe non regenerat filios carnis, sed generat; ac per hoc in eos, non quod regeneratus, sed quod generatus, trajicit. Sic igitur, sive reus infidelis, sive absolutus fidelis, non generat absolutos uterque, sed reos; quomodo non solum oleastri, sed etiam oleæ semina, non oleas generant, sed oleastros (*ibid.*, § 45).

[3] Restat ut in illo primo homine peccasse omnes intelligantur; quia in illo fuerunt omnes quando ille peccavit, unde peccatum nascendo trahitur, quod nisi renascendo non solvitur ("Contra Duas Epistolas Pelagianorum," § 7).

[4] Ad iram quippe Dei pertinet justam quicquid cæca et indomita concupiscentia faciunt libenter mali ("Enchiridion," chap. 27).

This is indeed a monstrous doctrine. Many human beings are condemned to Hell because they have participated in some unexplained manner in the sin of their ancestors, and that, though they have no power of themselves to resist the hereditary tendency to sin. Augustine, when pressed, declared that the ways of God were not to be criticised by man.

But upon what did he base this doctrine of original sin? He declared, indeed, that it was implied in the sacrament of Baptism.[1] But probably his main ground was his sense of sin's tyranny over mankind, of which he had had acute personal experience. In the "Confessions" (bk. I., chap. 19), he recalls his naughtiness in childhood—lies, thefts, greediness, cheating, loss of temper—not the innocence of childhood. "It must, then," he concludes, "have been because of their littleness that Thou, our King, didst commend children to be emblems of humility, when Thou saidst, 'Of such is the Kingdom of Heaven.'" With these words Augustine reveals the gulf between his view of human nature in children and the appreciation of them by Jesus.

In order to know the truth of the doctrine of original sin we must realise something of the experience which prompted it. Briefly, this experience seems to be the sense of inevitableness, apart from supernatural aid, which attaches to a human being as such, of developing a sinful character. It is felt to be not true that one's sinful disposition is to be traced to any yielding to temptation which one might have resisted. Rather one must sin, and, indeed, become more hardened in sin, unless saved by the spiritual influence which comes to those who have faith in Christ. Man as man is involved in sin, and sin tends to death. But we should not fail to remark, what seems to have escaped Augustine, that this innate tendency to sin is of very different degrees of strength. Moreover, children are born with various strong characteristics, some of them good, though they may not become manifest till much later in life. There appear strong innate tendencies to affection and self-control, which prevent the growth of malice and sensuality ; congenital intellectual and artistic dispositions afford desirable outlets for youthful energies ; even desire for right and good living and religious propensity may lie latent in the soul of the infant. On the other hand, some children do seem to be born with definitely bad tendencies.

---

[1] Jam nunc diligenter advertite, de baptismate parvulorum quam caute debeatis audire homines ejusmodi, qui neque aperte illi ætati lavacrum regenerationis et peccatorum remissionis audent negare, ne hoc Christianæ aures ferre non possint; et tamen opinionem suam, qua putant peccato primo hominis carnalem generationem obnoxiam non teneri, tueri et defensare persistunt, quamvis eis baptismum videantur in peccatorum remissionem concedere ("De Peccato Originali," § 1).

And there is a real innocence of childhood, which is as much a fact as congenital corruption, and must be allowed for in any adequate theory of the sin of humanity. It shows singular lack of human sympathy to deny or ignore the innocence and purity of children —a deficiency which cannot but make a theology inhuman and false.

We have, then, to account for the loss of innocence as the child grows to maturity. But the corruption that comes with growth is also very far from being a constant quantity. There surely have been saintly men who have passed from childhood to maturity without going through a period of serious corruption or perversion, or even without very severe struggles with temptation.

We find, then, that there are different degrees and kinds of original sin, and also different causes of original sin. In the first place, there is the tendency of the growing mental power to devote itself to the objects of the lower desires, which we saw to be the origin of sin in general. In other words, the individual, in passing from a quasi-animal condition into one of rational and moral aims and control, naturally tends to suffer the same sort of perversion which has befallen the human race in making this transition. We may accordingly endorse, in a certain sense, the rabbinical saying, "Every one is the Adam of his own soul."[1] On the other hand, the individual may be largely saved from falling a victim to this tendency; for one generation benefits through the experience of the preceding. A good parent does not altogether leave his child to find out for himself the evil of indulgence in lower pleasures, lest habits be formed which would not be cured during the lifetime, but would destroy the powers and the life; rather, he endeavours to induce his child to discipline his passions and to develop higher faculties, so profiting by the accumulated moral experience of the race.

Secondly, we will consider heredity of sinful disposition. Scientific investigation has shown that there is little regular transmission of acquired qualities through physical parentage. Now immorality could hardly be the result of spontaneous variation unless it were of such a kind as to give advantage in the struggle for existence. On the whole, then, we cannot count as

[1] Apocalypse of Baruch, liv. 19: "Non est ergo Adam causa, nisi animæ suæ tantum; nos vero unusquisque fuit animæ suæ Adam."

very important any merely physical transmission of intemperance. On the other hand, there is certainly mental transmission of immorality. Perverse moral judgments and bad customs and institutions which incite to vice are passed on from generation to generation. There is not much deliberate imitation of immorality ; but social customs are adopted as a matter of course, and the prevalent moral tone insensibly permeates the minds of the young. And it commonly requires a constant effort to isolate oneself from the society in which one has been born and brought up, living in antagonism to one's fellows by the practice of a morality that conflicts strongly with theirs.[1] Conversely, of course, there is mental heredity of good. But the mental heredity of evil does largely condition that sense of the inevitableness of sin which underlies the doctrine of original sin.

But, thirdly, we cannot altogether dismiss the idea of physical transmission of good and evil character. A race or family may evolve or degenerate, moral and physical character changing concomitantly. And such changes seem to arise from vital forces which express themselves in living beings. But the character of a vital force operative in a race or family must be in part determined by the acts and aspirations of the members of that race or family. Except by such hypothesis, how else could we account for degenerate and tainted stocks?

In the fourth place, there are congenital differences which do not appear to be due to any sort of heredity.

---

[1] Cp. Ritschl, "Justification and Reconciliation," vol. iii., p. 338, English trans. : "This form of sinful federation [the kingdom of sin] affects every one, at least in this way, that we become accustomed to standing forms of sin, at any rate in others, and acquiesce in them as the ordinary expression of human nature."

Indeed, children often resemble their parents closely in physical qualities and in traits of manner, while they are profoundly dissimilar both to their parents and to their brothers and sisters in moral and intellectual character. And among these differences may be found self-will, pride, indolence, and sensuality, which must be counted as original sin. But what is the origin of these congenital dispositions, both good and bad, in which the child differs widely from his parents? We saw above that the progress of the human race is conditioned by the discontinuity of its life made by death and birth. This discontinuity, indeed, is sufficient to make recovery from perversion possible, but not sufficient entirely to relieve one generation of the evil tendencies due to the sin of the preceding. Now it occurred to us that death and birth might serve a like purpose in the evolution of the individual—namely, relief from bondage to the evil habits caused by his own mistakes. But, if the analogy holds good, some evil effect would remain ; only, the new life would grow up in relative independence of the old, and so be more or less able to overcome the evil. May not, then, these evil tendencies in children be due to sin in previous lives? But—to proceed with the analogy—like as one generation profits by seeing the consequences of the sins of the preceding, so disaster following upon some sin in one life may cause a disinclination to that sin in the succeeding ; whereas sinful dispositions which had not yet resulted in disaster would act as a perverting influence on the young life, and so help to make that sense of liability to sin which is expressed in the doctrine of original sin. We should remark incidentally that the sinful dispositions may be latent to some degree for a while, so that comparatively untainted human nature may have opportunity to develop.

What other explanation of the facts is forthcoming? Certainly the hypothesis that life and birth have a like function in the evolution of the individual to that which they have in the evolution of the race at once helps to explain original sin, and also indicates how the individual may conceivably profit by punishment and overcome the evil tendencies begotten in him by his misdoing.

The doctrine of original sin is based upon the fact of the inherent liability of man to sin, which is largely due to the inter-relation of human lives ; for the causal inter-relation extends beyond the limits of the individual human life. We may notice by the way the atomistic or Pelagian view of sin, according to which each act is, as it were, a creation *de novo*. This is to ignore the continuity and unity of the individual life. Acts of sin arise out of and engender relatively permanent sinful habits or dispositions. These do not, indeed, necessarily determine every act, but they may exercise strong influence.

Now not only has one human life unity and continuity, but it forms part of greater unities and is continuous with other human lives. There are unities such as the family, societies of various kinds, the nation, even to some degree the human race itself, of which the members mutually influence the characters of each. And any one life owes its character in some degree to previous lives. And original sin—except in so far as it is a case of fresh corruption due to the contact of higher faculties with the lower nature—is due to the fact that one individual life belongs to greater unities and continuities. Not that each life is absolutely determined by other lives; it is partially dependent on them and partially independent of them—as, indeed, the individual in any particular act is partially dependent on and partially independent of the habits he has acquired.

Augustine was conscious of important facts which his opponents ignored. He saw that sin consisted not so much in isolated acts of an indeterminate will as in a relatively permanent corruption of the will; and he was also aware that individual lives were not entirely self-determining, but were subject to sinful influences through the solidarity and continuity of mankind. But he attempted to express and explain all this by means of certain theological and ethical doctrines and a certain Jewish tradition of the beginning of the human race. And thus he elaborated a truly frightful theory. But the re-thinking of this doctrine belongs to the general process of the evolution of Christianity; for Christianity had to express itself in terms of the philosophy and science of ancient times, and has now to express itself in terms of the philosophy and science that are the fruit of modern thought and research, and in so doing must discard much of the old doctrine.

A few points remain to be noticed:—

1. The dogma "that original sin standeth not in the following of Adam"[1] is intended to contradict the Pelagian view—namely, that every child falls into sin by virtue of the choice of his own indeterminate will, it being assumed that the first sin did occur in this manner; for, according to the Augustinian theory, man was created good,[2]

---

[1] Articles of Religion of the Church of England, No. IX.

[2] Nam et ipse Adam immaculatus procul dubio factus est ("De Natura et Gratia," § 75).

and fell through his own free-will; whereas sin in after generations is the necessary result of the first sin of man.[1] We have found that some of the liability to sin which underlies the doctrine is due to a like cause to that which produced the first sin. Even so, however, we dissociate ourselves from that which the dictum "Original sin consists in the following of Adam" was intended to express—namely, the power of the will not to sin in virtue of its indeterminateness.

2. According to the ancient doctrine, children were born, not only with original sin, but also with original guilt. This tenet was needed to account for the justice of the entail of sin. Augustine held that the punishment of sin was more sin, so that original sin and the actual sin arising out of it were deserved on account of the sin of all men in Adam.

Guilt, then, in this connection seems to mean desert of punishment.[2] But it would be absurd to punish a child merely on account of his liability to sin, though it would not be absurd to punish him for the actual sin which issued from this liability. The infliction of a disliked experience is not properly punishment till it is recognised by the person punished as the result of wrong-doing. Accordingly, original sin seems not to be guilt, but rather potentiality of guilt.

But there is a sense in which sin due to original sin may be called punishment. Original sin springs in part from actual sin—the sin of those persons and lives to which the individual life is related. Now sin tends to work itself out to its conclusion, which is disaster and death. Thus, all stages, whether in the race or in the individual, subsequent to the first are stages towards the ultimate punishment, which is the destruction of the sin and of that part of the sinner's soul which is corrupt. This process may transfer itself from soul to soul and from life to life. The sin of one generation produces perhaps worse and more virulent sin in the next, and so on until the corrupted parts of the nation perish. Likewise, the evil disposition with which one life starts may be the continuance of unpunished sin of a previous life, and is a stage towards the punishment that shall at last eradicate the sinful growth.[1]

---

[1] Ego sic dixi peccatum sine voluntate esse non posse, quomodo dicimus poma vel frumenta sine radicibus esse non posse. . . . Sine voluntate non potest esse, nam sine voluntate non potest existere ut sit; sine autem voluntate potest esse, quia sine voluntate potest manere quod existit ("Opus Imperfectum," iv., §§ 97, 99).

[2] *Vide* IX of the Articles of Religion of the Church of England, in which it is said that original sin "deserveth God's wrath and damnation."

3. According to the ancient ecclesiastical doctrine, not only sinful disposition and guilt, but also mortality followed from the transgression of the first ancestors of man. As the Jewish mind became reflective, death appeared to it as a blot on Creation. The sense of estrangement from God by sin and the threatened punishment of death in the narrative of Genesis seemed to furnish an explanation. The first recorded statement of this doctrine is in the book Ecclesiasticus xxv. 24: "Of woman came the beginning of sin, and through her we all die." Later it became a prevalent opinion among learned Jews. To judge by the evidence, universal death was commonly attributed to Adam's sin long before universal sinfulness.[2] St. Paul made it part of Christian belief (Romans v. 12).

But the modern mind cannot accept this doctrine.

---

[1] But see the chapter on Judgment, in which punishment and destruction of sinful natures are distinguished.

[2] *Vide* F. R. Tennant, "The Fall and Original Sin," *passim.*

The only sort of innocence that primitive man possessed must have been akin to the innocence of animals ; but animals were subject to death long before man arrived on the earth.

Yet this childish inference, that mortality is a punishment for sin, may be made to symbolise profound truth. We have already seen that death serves to relieve man of his mistakes and misdeeds. Death, together with birth, provides discontinuity in human life, so that man may to some degree be rid of the injuries and evil habits contracted in the past, and at the same time profit by the experience of the results of various courses of conduct. That is evident in the race. It is highly probable that death performs a like function for the individual, especially since sinful habits are largely dependent on the body which perishes at death.

But the necessity for death seems to lie deeper than this. Man, whether the human race or the individual soul, develops through realising himself in successive forms. Through taking one form he gains power to take a superior form, and so on. But this implies that he must discard the old forms and recover the plasticity which is necessary for development. He loses this plasticity as he gains a form, and recovers it when he discards that form and begins to develop into a new one. In other words, the plasticity of youth is lost as the person gains a mature intellectual and moral character, and is recovered by means of death, that the person may grow a new and superior character. Like as one may study a subject, which is presently almost forgotten, less for the sake of the knowledge than for the intellectual power which is gained through the study, so does a soul develop a character in a lifetime, not so much for the character itself as for the growth of the inner nature of reason and goodwill and love.

But it belongs to the Christian hope that man will eventually attain immortality. As sin is progressively overcome and the mental nature develops, so does man become more and more capable of spiritual life. But spiritual life is Divine life, and free from such limitations and imperfections as attach to this human life. On that account, we may suppose, he will not need to be continually renewed and delivered by death. But in the early stage of the growth of the spiritual death still reigns. May it be that it will be overcome gradually, as the need for it gradually diminishes?

4. It was part of the ancient doctrine that baptism is a means of the forgiveness of original sin. Augustine professed that it was largely regard for this sacrament that induced him to insist on the sinfulness of the new-born child, lest, if there were no sin to be forgiven, the value of the sacrament might seem very much less. This conclusion was apparently arrived at through a childish piece of reasoning. Baptism was originally the rite which marked allegiance to Christ. Now allegiance to Christ was held to constitute a new relation to God, one in which the soul was spiritually quickened, and, in consequence, the antagonism to God called "sin" was held to be abolished. Furthermore, allegiance to Christ carried with it entrance into the community which existed for the purpose of preparing for the Kingdom of Heaven—namely, the Church. But when the baptism of infants came into vogue, certain of the baptized had, presumably, committed no sin. So, in order to save this aspect of baptism, Augustine insisted that the infant

was, at any rate, guilty of original sin. But is not this like trying to show that every one has a certain disease, lest a famous remedy for it should become depreciated? Besides, remission of sins is surely not the most important change of which baptism is the efficacious symbol, but rather allegiance to Christ and the spiritual new birth which accompanies it.

What effect, then, has baptism on the facts denoted by the term "original sin"? The modern mind is opposed to a view of sacraments according to which they could mediate moral and spiritual changes otherwise than with the consciousness of those in whom the change is worked. But baptism is the rite of admission into the Church of Christ—that is, the society which exists for preparing souls religiously and morally for the spiritual life; and, in so far as it does this, it will counteract those tendencies which are signified by the term "original sin." Through being brought up in the Church the child will be subject to Christian influences, in so far as the Church is truly Christian, instead of to the corrupting influences which would beset him in unregenerated human society—what Ritschl called the "kingdom of sin." It is, indeed, the Christian influences coming to those educated and living in the Church rather than baptism that check and prevent original sin. But the frequent performance of the sacrament being viewed by grown people may, by reminding them of their own baptism, move them to renew their allegiance to Christ and to open their hearts and minds to receive the Christian influences of the Church, and also impress on them their duties to the young members of the Church of bringing to bear these influences upon them.

## CHAPTER VI

# THE ATONEMENT

THE Atonement is the name for the work of Christ whereby through His death, or His death and resurrection, He has made it possible for men in a way or to a degree in which it was not possible before to pass from the state of antagonism to God to the state of harmony with God.

The religious experience upon which the doctrine of the Atonement is based and that upon which the doctrine of Christ is based are so far the same in that both include the experience of entering through Christ into union with God. But the former includes also the previous antagonism to God, and the latter the actual Divine life that ensues on the union with God. The experience upon which the doctrine of the Holy Spirit is based is also partly the same as the experience of atonement, since in atonement the Spirit works on the soul, but it includes also the subsequent spiritual communion with God. Still, strict boundaries are not to be drawn: these doctrines have some reference to what lies outside their special province. Atonement shades off over the growing Divine life and communion with God, and the Divine life in the soul and the communion of the soul with God are largely the same life considered in different relations.

The experience of religious atonement, being different in kind from the experience of ordinary life, was naturally expressed through symbols. We may instance: "The blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin"; "Ye are bought with a price." Actual washing and actual purchasing are not intended; but it is attempted through these ideas to help towards the understanding of what actually takes place.

But the symbolic merges itself into theory. In the New Testament the Atonement is not only symbolised through ideas derived from sacrificial ritual, but is actually subsumed under the notion of sacrifice. St. Paul and St. John occasionally write of the death of Christ as a sacrifice. St. Paul regards it more frequently as redemption (that is, ransom). However, he theorises little or not at all as to how Christ effected man's salvation. But in the Epistle to the Hebrews there is given a theory of the work of Christ as sacrifice.

Much later, when the idea of sacrifice no longer formed an ordinary category of thought, but seemed itself to require explanation, attempts were made to explain the Atonement as punishment and as purchase. These are instances of Christianity being expressed through the forms of thought current in any particular age. Such theories of the Atonement were constructed out of the prevalent ethics of commerce and civil justice. With the growth of the moral consciousness they came to seem crude and harsh.[1]

In order to obtain the truth of the Atonement we should examine the experience upon which the doctrine of the Atonement is based, bearing in mind that through Christianity souls acquire spiritual life in communion with God. Now we have learned to think of the development of the mental nature in wisdom and righteousness and love as conditioning the birth and growth in the soul of the spiritual nature. But the spiritual birth seems to occur even in morally corrupt souls in response to religion. It is not required of a man that he should make himself throughout fit for the Divine life before he receives it. Rather, an intense longing for the new life and a certain opening of the soul to God may occasion the spiritual birth ; and the spiritual nature, thus having been quickened in the soul and being kept alive through spiritual communion with God, will transform the mental nature in accordance with itself. And so the work of Christ in the Atonement—at least as regards man—is to bring about in the soul the mental state, but especially the religious attitude and act in response to which spiritual life is given by God.

---

[1] *Vide* Principal Caird in "The Fundamental Ideas of Christianity," Lectures XVI., XVII.

But morality and religion mutually condition each other. If a man is to be sensible of his moral corruption, he must have at least some notion of what goodness is, and so a germ of morality in his character. Accordingly the religious act which is prompted by the sense of moral corruption implies at least a germ of morality. And the quality of the religion will depend on the quality of this germ of morality. Aspiration after purity, for instance, in contrast to sensuality gives the religious will less content than aspiration to serve one's fellow-men in love. Wherefore we may expect to find differences in experiences of atonement, with corresponding differences in the theories of the Atonement arising out of them.

In the light of this we will now consider the experience of atonement; first the general nature of the experience, then the main forms in which it has appeared under Christianity.

The experience of religious atonement is at least partly identical with that known as "conversion." But there may be conversion other than religious—change of moral character, change of intellectual outlook, change of affection, change of interest, change of taste. All these may take place in a short space of time and with considerable emotion. Commonly there have been growing tendencies of thought and will and emotion, which, after remaining comparatively latent, causing the while disquietude and vexation, at last gain the mastery and change the character of the mind. There is also religious conversion in the sense of change of religion, in which inclination that may have long been gaining strength suddenly overcomes the old attachment.

Now the experience of atonement resembles these changes. Inclinations to a better devotion to God gather strength in secret and finally induce a self-abandonment to the Divine will. And we must not overlook atonement which occurs gently along with the growth of religion, with no sudden upheaval of the soul. But there is this special element in the experience of atonement—the subject feels that he is acted on by some great invisible being and thereby obtains a higher kind of life. It is true, indeed, that when the mind is deeply stirred in other ways than the specifically religious there is the sense of participation in Divine life. And it is by no means easy accurately to delimit the spiritual, nor to distinguish Divine inspiration from the spontaneous workings of the soul. But the sense of being Divinely quickened is essential to the experience of religious atonement, and on the whole more prominent in this than in other kinds of conversion.

Religious conversions commonly run this course : the subject enters into a state of religious dissatisfaction, becoming acutely conscious of sin or antagonism to God. Then he performs an act of religious acceptance of or yielding to what he conceives to be the Divine will. And then he has a blissful sense of being acted on and even overwhelmed by the Spirit of God.

Religious acceptance of or yielding to the Divine will seems, then, to be the general condition of the experience of atonement. Dr. Starbuck and Professor James distinguish, indeed, between the " volitional type " and the " type by self-surrender " of conversion. In other words, the conditioning act sometimes takes more the form of acceptance of the Divine will and sometimes more the form of yielding to the Divine will. But—to quote Professor James[1]—" The difference between the two types is after all not radical. Even in the most voluntarily built-up sort of regeneration there are passages of partial self-surrender interposed ; and in the great majority of all cases, when the will has done its uttermost towards bringing one close to the complete unification aspired after, it seems that the very last step must be left to other forces and performed without the help of its activity. In other words, self-surrender becomes then indispensable. 'The personal will,' says Dr. Starbuck, 'must be given up. In many cases relief persistently refuses to come until the person ceases to resist, or to make an effort in the direction he desires to go.'

---

[1] "Varieties of Religious Experience," p. 208.

" 'I had said I would not give up; but when my will was broken, it was all over,' writes one of Starbuck's correspondents. Another says: 'I simply said: "Lord, I have done all I can; I leave the whole matter with Thee"; and immediately there came a great peace.' Another: 'All at once it occurred to me that I might be saved too, if I would stop trying to do it all myself, and follow Jesus: somehow I lost my load.' Another: 'I finally ceased to resist, and gave myself up, though it was a hard struggle. Gradually the feeling came over me that I had done my part, and God was willing to do His.' 'Lord, Thy will be done; damn or save!' cries John Nelson, exhausted with the anxious struggle to escape damnation; and at that moment his soul was filled with peace." We should refer to the fuller accounts of conversions quoted by Professor James.

Self-surrender to the Divine will seems to be the general conditioning act of the sense of religious atonement. This self-surrender may contain more or less of an active element. It may, in particular, vary between enthusiastic devotion to perform the Divine will and passive yielding to Divine influence. But in both cases the act is self-surrender. And, indeed, we should expect that self-surrender would favour the operation on the soul of Divine power.

The name of this self-surrender in the writings of St. Paul, who may fittingly be called the father of the doctrine of the Atonement, is *πίστις*, translated "faith." Justification, or the reception into Divine favour, is mediated by faith. Now that in St. Paul's experience the transition took place by means of an act of self-surrender to the will of God is borne out by his account of his own conversion. For the words which he hears from Heaven, "It is hard for thee to kick against the goad," imply that he had been fighting against the Divine will, and was then induced to submit.[1] But faith is also the attitude of the soul whereby it remains continually united to God (*vide* Galatians ii. 20; Ephesians iii. 17).

Luther's religious experience exhibits similar features. "What gave him," writes Köstlin,[2] "the deepest anxiety and harassed him the most were those very inward stirrings which revealed to him his opposition to God's eternal demands, the fulfilment of which he thought indispensable for reconciliation to God." "God in His great mercy revealed to him that what St. Paul and the Gospel proclaimed was righteousness given freely to us by the grace of God, who forgives those who have faith in His message of mercy, and justifies them, and gives them eternal life."[3]

Such, then, is the general nature of the experience of atonement—self-surrender to the Divine followed by a sense of being spiritually acted on by the Divine. Apparently it is not confined to Christianity. Some Oriental religions offer a kind of atonement, mystical union with the Infinite being thought to follow upon surrender of the will. And in Christian peoples conversions may occur with little consciousness of Christ.[4]

---

[1] Cp. Lightfoot, "Colossians," p. 187 (ed. 1875), where faith is defined as "the absolute surrender of self to a being who has the right to demand that surrender."

[2] "Life of Luther," Eng. trans., p. 41.

[3] *Op. cit.*, p. 46.

[4] W. James, *ibid.*, p. 203: "Dr. Leuba rightly remarks that there is

It is hard to suppose these experiences to be illusory. On the other hand, atonement is more readily induced by certain forms of religion than by others, and it is probable that it varies in character with the religion.

We will next consider more in detail atonement under Christianity. Now, in order to understand the forms which atonement has actually taken under Christianity and the possibility of any other forms, we should think how Christ is an agent in bringing about self-surrender to the Divine as being the religious act conditioning atonement.

Briefly, the main ways in which Christ helps to bring about religious self-surrender are these: Through the Cross God is represented as of a character to invite self-surrender—namely, as ready to forgive and pitiful and loving. Also through the Cross sin is emphasised, so that man longs for escape from it and for forgiveness. Through the Resurrection is shown the genuineness of Christ's mission and the power of God to raise man to a higher life. And through Christ's teaching and life and submission to the Cross is manifested the goodness to which God calls man. The self-surrender is, then, induced by a striking and appealing revelation of what God is, of the present condition of man, of the life with which God will endow man, and of the religion and morality which favour the birth and growth of that life.

---

little doctrinal theology in such an experience [as Mr. Hadley's], which starts with the absolute need of a higher helper and ends with the sense that he has helped us. He gives other cases of drunkards' conversions which are purely ethical, containing, as recorded, no theological beliefs whatever. John B. Gough's case, for instance, is practically, says Dr. Leuba, the conversion of an atheist—neither God nor Jesus being mentioned."

But there may be differences in the experience of atonement under Christianity. For one or more of these aspects of the significance of Christ may be strongly felt and others relatively neglected ; and any one aspect may be variously apprehended. And it seems probable that the quality of the atonement attained is in part determined by the quality of the self-surrender, the action of the Spirit of God in the soul varying somewhat according to the religious disposition. This is borne out by observation of certain forms of revivalism, where there is strong sense of real Divine inspiration, yet the resulting creed and temper of mind may be narrow and harsh. Thus, the more in his self-surrender to God a man believes God to be loving, the more, we may suppose, will the Holy Spirit act on him as a loving influence ; whereas those who regard Him rather as sternly righteous may seem to find Him so in their experience of atonement. Still, we should be prepared to allow that even these latter are really affected by the Holy Spirit. With this in mind we will now examine certain typical forms of atonement under Christianity.

In revivalist circles a common type of conversion is the following : The subject's delinquencies from the accepted moral and religious code of the more pious of his fellows are brought home to him—*e.g.*, that he gives way to drink, is indolent, irreligious ; then he realises that he is incapable of overcoming these evil tendencies by himself ; then he is led, commonly at some religious meeting, to prostrate himself before God in a passion of self-loathing and to cry out for forgiveness and help, relying upon the salvation won for men by Christ ; and thereon he receives a sense of being flooded by Divine influence.

To take three instances from Professor James:—

1. "Just at this point the whole question of Gospel salvation opened to my mind in a manner most marvellous to me at the time. I think I then saw as clearly as I ever have in my life the reality and fulness of the atonement of Christ. Gospel salvation seemed to be an offer of something to be accepted, and all that was necessary on my part was to get my own consent to give up my sins and accept Christ. After this distinct revelation had stood for some little time before my mind, the question seemed to be put, 'Will you accept it now, to-day?'"[1] This Professor James instances as a conversion in which the volitional element was strong.

2. "In all this period, that is, up to thirty-three years of age, I never had a desire to reform on religious grounds. But all my pangs were due to some terrible remorse I used to feel after a heavy carousal, the remorse taking the shape of regret after my folly in wasting my life in such a way—a man of superior talents and education. This terrible remorse turned me gray in one night, and whenever it came upon me I was perceptibly grayer the next morning. What I suffered in this way is beyond the expression of words. It was hell-fire in all its most dreadful tortures. Often did I vow that if I got over 'this time' I would reform. . . .

"I was converted in my own bedroom in my father's rectory-house at precisely three o'clock in the afternoon of a hot July day (July 13, 1886). . . . A young lady friend sent me a copy of Professor Drummond's 'Natural Law in the Spiritual World,' asking me my opinion of it as a literary work only. Being proud of my critical talents and wishing to enhance myself in my new friend's esteem, I took the book to my bedroom for quiet, intending to give it a thorough study, and then write her what I thought of it. It was here that God met me face to face, and I shall never forget the meeting. 'He that hath the Son hath life eternal; he that hath not the Son hath not life.' I had read this scores of times before, but this made all the difference. I was now in God's presence and my attention was absolutely 'soldered' on to this verse, and I was not allowed to proceed with the book till I had fairly considered what these words really involved. . . . I was lost to a certainty, and being naturally of a brave disposition I did not quail under it, but deep sorrow for the past, mixed with regret for what I had lost, took hold upon me, and my soul thrilled within me to think it was all over. Then there crept in upon me so gently, so lovingly, so unmistakably, a way of escape, and what was it after all? The old, old story over again, told in the simplest way: 'There is no name under heaven whereby ye can be saved except that of the Lord Jesus Christ.'"[1]

---

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 207.

3. "I know not how I got back into the encampment, but found myself staggering up to Rev. ——'s Holiness tent—and as it was full of seekers and a terrible noise inside, some groaning, some laughing, and some shouting, [and] by a large oak, ten feet from the tent, I fell on my face by a bench, and tried to pray, and every time I would call on God, something like a man's hand would strangle me by choking. I don't

---

[1] Pp. 221, 222.

know whether there were any one around or near me or not. I thought I should surely die if I did not get help, but just as often as I would pray that unseen hand was felt on my throat and my breath squeezed off. Finally something said: 'Venture on the atonement, for you will die anyway if you don't.' So I made one final struggle to call on God for mercy, with the same choking and strangling, determined to finish the sentence of prayer for Mercy, if I did strangle and die, and the last I remember that time was falling back on the ground with the same unseen hand on my throat. I don't know how long I lay there or what was going on. None of my folks were present. When I came to myself, there was a crowd around me praising God. The very heavens seemed to open and pour down rays of light and glory. Not for a moment only, but all day and night, floods of light and glory seemed to pour through my soul, and oh, how I was changed and everything became new!"[1]

In these cases, so far as quoted by Professor James, there is little evidence that the subjects were deeply affected, at least directly, by the moral and religious ideal presented by the teaching and death of Jesus Christ. Rather, an acute consciousness both of sinfulness in the form of worldliness and intemperance and of inability to act righteously seems to have driven them to seek that salvation from sin which the death of Christ was supposed to have made possible. In a community with a revivalistic type of religion, the frequent occurrence of conversions and the prevalent opinion that they are right and needful urge in the same direction. But conversions take place occasionally apart from any revivalist movement or teaching.

---

[1] P. 250.

How, in such cases generally, do the death and resurrection of Christ induce and determine the religious act which conditions the experience of atonement? They seem to have done so mainly by marking the evil of sin (since sin is held to have necessitated the death of Christ), and by standing as an earnest that God will forgive and save those who cry to Him. The standard by which the character is judged sinful is rather indirectly than directly derived from Christ, and is not necessarily a very high one. On the other hand, if pleasant practices have to be renounced, and ridicule faced in the cause of the faith, the act of self-surrender may involve a high degree of renunciation, equivalent in moral worth to deeds springing from a much more developed character.

Still, the quality of atonement obtained does seem to vary with the character of the mental attitude with which it is sought. It can hardly be that such religious experience as we have been considering is illusory, or that the subjects have not really been affected by the Spirit of God. On the other hand, revivalism not uncommonly issues in a fanatical and even egoistic kind of religion and morality. Wherefore it appears most reasonable to hold that atonement and spiritual life may be won in imperfect forms. Just because the ideal held is one of personal purity and rectitude rather than that of love and devotion to the will of God, which is the true morality of the Cross, therefore the accompanying atonement is less fruitful and secure than that obtained by the truest followers of Christ. Even when the spiritual springs up in the mental, the character of the mental may still for some time greatly affect for better or worse the development of personality. When the Divine enters into the human, it does not at once completely transform the human, but must itself suffer limitation from it.

We should also notice that atonement tends to conform to certain types in particular epochs and communities, the type being maintained by theological theory. And the theological theory may commonly be traced to the religious experience of some genius together with its interpretation by means of the thought current in his day. Thus, the somewhat individualistic type of atonement prevalent in Methodism is probably derived largely from Luther. He thought of the work of Christ as predominantly that of procuring God's forgiveness for all who had faith, which he interpreted as trust ; while he paid comparatively little heed to the moral ideal exhibited by Christ, which should determine the content of faith and so the character of the spiritual life which faith conditions. And the theology of Luther was to a great extent derived from Anselm's theory of the Atonement as substitution. So it came about that religion was viewed in isolation from morality, to the detriment of both.

We will examine Luther's experience of atonement more closely. In the convent at Erfurt he was for some two years tortured with the sense of his inability to satisfy the demands of God. Self-imposed penances failed to produce in him the sense of Divine favour. He writes of himself : "I was then the most miserable man on earth ; day and night there was nothing but wailing and despair, so that no one could keep me under restraint."[1] The religious teaching to which he had been accustomed was one which presented God rather as a stern judge and demanded much from man's own effort. To quote Köstlin from the "Life of Luther": [1] "Reference to the bitter passion and death of the Saviour was not omitted, it is true, by the theologians with whom Luther had to do, and frequently, as, for example, by his teacher, Palz, was impressed on Christian hearts in words full of feeling. But the chief stress was laid, not on the redeeming love on which man could rest his confident assurance, but on the necessity of offering oneself to Him who had offered Himself for man, and of submitting even to the pains of death, in imitation of Him, and to pay the penalty of sin. In this way, again and again, Luther saw before him claims on the part of God which he could not hope to satisfy. His sorest trial was caused by the thought that God Himself should have the will to let him fail after all his fruitless efforts, and finally be numbered with the lost." He obtained peace and the sense of atonement through perception of the loving purpose of God manifested in the crucifixion of Christ. "Staupitz taught him . . . that for peace with God, he must not look to his own good resolutions to lead a better life, which he had not the strength to carry out, or to his own acts, which could never satisfy the law of God, but must trust with patience to God's forgiving mercy, and learn to see in Christ, whom God permitted to suffer for the sins of man, not the threatening judge, but rather the loving Saviour. To Christ above all he referred him, when Luther pondered on the secret, eternal will of God, and was near despair. God's eternal purpose, he would say, shines clearly in the wounds of Christ."[1] With this agrees Professor Harnack's account of Luther's theology:[2] "Trust in God 'on account of Christ' (*propter Christum*) is the real content of religion, which nothing transcends, and the limitations of which can be removed by no speculation. Trust in the 'truth' of God and in the work of Christ formed for him a unity, and he knew no other way of approaching the Being who rules heaven and earth than by the Cross of Christ (*per crucem Christi*)." "Faith . . . was the certainty of forgiveness of sins, and therefore also the personal and continuous surrender to God as Father of Jesus Christ, which transforms and renews the whole man."[3] The Cross of Christ enabled Luther to trust God, in that it showed him God's purpose of mercy towards man.

---

[1] "Brief Answer to Duke George's Latest Book," Erl., ed., xxxi., p. 279. Cited by Harnack, "History of Dogma," Eng. trans., vol. vii., p. 181.

---

[1] Eng. trans., p. 40.

But why did not the effort to offer himself to Christ in imitation of His self-sacrifice win for him the experience of atonement? Surely because the thought of God or Christ as a stern judge made this religious act forced and artificial. Luther tried to yield himself to God, but could not whole-heartedly since he viewed Him with fear rather than with trust.

But the thought of God or Christ as ready to forgive made the religious act free and natural. It drew the man in a fervour of worship to offer himself to God. The instinctive shrinking was gone; an eager movement to God took its place. And believing God to be merciful, he was the more susceptible to the pardoning influence of the Holy Spirit.

---

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 44.

[2] "History of Dogma," Eng. trans., vii., p. 183.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 185.

Let us try to gather the lessons which the experience of Luther affords. In the act of soul which conditions the operation of the Holy Spirit there are two distinguishable elements, an active and a passive, one relatively self-assertion and the other self-surrender. Now Luther had the active and self-assertive element for some time under the influence of his teachers. He strove to offer himself to God as revealed in Christ and to live in imitation of Christ. Later came the other element, trustful self-yielding to God, and this finally conditioned his atonement. Such being his experience, Luther emphasised the second element in the condition of salvation at the expense of the first. He became the preacher of trust in the mercy of God, of assurance in the forgiveness of sins, of faith without works. He failed to see that the fulness of his atonement was also conditioned by his prior religious state, that of yearning after righteousness in the following of Christ.

Luther preached that the righteousness of men was as filthy rags, not sufficiently asserting that the hungering and thirsting after righteousness, the soul's effort towards the good, was at once good and lovable and the preparation for the Divine life. If all the human were necessarily as worthless as Luther declared, it could never become capable of the Divine. The truth rather is that the human, under the influence of God, becomes progressively capable of receiving the Divine, and the Divine entering transforms the human yet further.

Hence it came to pass that some of Luther's followers developed antinomianism and quietism. Without passing through such travail of soul as preceded their teacher's conversion, in hearkening to his doctrine of the way of salvation, they were content to trust and believe without desiring or doing. The Lutheran development of Christianity was also largely aided by a doctrine of the work of Christ which represented it as done for men rather than done in men. But religion so founded inevitably tended to shrink almost into a complacent belief in the will of God to save, which interfered but little with devotion to worldly interests.

We pass now to consider the religious experience of St. Paul which inspired his teaching on the Atonement. Now, whereas Luther's experience of atonement seems to have been immediately conditioned chiefly by religious trust, St. Paul's experience of atonement seems to have been immediately conditioned also very largely by religious devotion. And this difference of their experience produced a corresponding difference in their teaching on the Atonement.

St. Paul possessed a strong religious instinct, which, under Pharisaic influences, took the form of craving for harmony of will with the Divine commandments. This led him to a scrupulous fulfilment of the moral and ceremonial laws of the Jewish religion. In later life he confessed that "after the straitest sect of our religion I lived a Pharisee." He asserts even that "as touching the righteousness which is in the law" he was "found blameless." This latter statement appears at variance with his description of the conflict between the law and sin, evidently drawn from his personal experience (Romans vii. 7–25). Still, it might well be that he kept the law at least as well as most of the strict adherents of Judaism, so as to gain a reputation for blamelessness, and yet not well enough to satisfy his own conscience. For, indeed, a righteousness which consisted in definite prescribed actions and abstentions, mainly ceremonial, might normally not be difficult for one who took his religion seriously ; while he might yet be conscious of falling far short of the spirit of righteousness which the actions and abstentions seemed intended to express. Perhaps it is significant that he singles out the tenth commandment as that which he was unable to keep: "I had not known sin, except through the law: for I had not known coveting [or lust], except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet [or lust] : but sin, finding occasion, wrought in me through the commandment all manner of coveting [or lust]." Obedience to the commandments prescribing acts was unable to give St. Paul permanent religious satisfaction. For to do what God wills for one is not equivalent to having the same will as God. The law may be obeyed because it is expedient to obey it, while the main activities of the soul may conflict with the Divine will as revealed by the law. So the law made St. Paul conscious of being at variance with God, while not by the most scrupulous obedience to the law could he feel in harmony with God. Thus in its beginnings the sense of sin was in St. Paul a sense of moral discord with the Divine will. But, perhaps, (according to the suggestion made in the previous chapter) the conflict of the spiritual nature in its infancy with an antagonistic mental condition added to the misery.

The desire to be reconciled to God was the germ of that which afterwards developed into the self-surrender whereby atonement was won. As yet, however, it was weak and unformed—a desire to be pleasing to

God rather than a passion to yield entirely to God. Because the main interest of the personality was worldly, thus keeping in check and even perverting the religious impulse, the soul was not yet capable of an ample spiritual life.

The religious dissatisfaction consequent on the antagonism of the personality to the Divine will was interpreted by St. Paul as the sense of Divine disfavour. He seemed to feel the hostility of God towards him. He imagined himself condemned before God, His enemy and an object of His wrath (Romans v. 16, 18; viii. 1, 7; xi. 32; Ephesians ii. 3).

Now what attitude should we naturally expect that a Pharisee with the earnestness of St. Paul would adopt towards Christianity? Since the law was the chief means, though inadequate, to the satisfaction of his religious instincts, he would passionately defend it against any sect which, like Christianity, seemed to treat it with too little reverence. Thus we find St. Paul among the most zealous persecutors of the Christians. And he would feel that he had good ground for persecuting them, seeing that God had made evident the falsity of the claim of Jesus to be the Messiah by allowing Him to be put to a violent death.

But in coming into closer contact with the Christians St. Paul was, we may suppose, struck with the appearance of such a religious peace and joy as he strove for in vain. But how could they be so confident, he may have wondered, if the man whom they held to be the Anointed of God had been allowed to perish ignominiously?

Perhaps we may see in the speech and death of Stephen influences which tended to shake St. Paul's confidence in Pharisaism and attract him to Christianity. For the authorship of the Acts of the Apostles may with great probability be assigned to a travelling companion of St. Paul's, so that it is likely that history in which St. Paul participated rests on St. Paul's testimony. Now the trial and death of Stephen are recounted at some length and with graphic detail. St. Paul seems to have been impressed by Stephen's appearance of possessing that serene assurance of Divine favour which he had longed for but could not obtain—a joyful consciousness of the loving support of God which rendered him fearless before his persecutors, from whom by submission he might have escaped. "All that sat in the council, fastening their eyes on him, saw his face as it had been the face of an angel." Perhaps for long afterwards St. Paul was haunted by the vision of the rapt and ethereal look on the face of Stephen, as he advanced to martyrdom. And then Stephen's speech suggested an answer to the objection felt by St. Paul against Jesus having been the Messiah. The Jews' rejection of the Christ would be in the line of Israel's treatment of all the greatest prophets of God since the beginning. Stephen, in a summary of Israel's history, emphasises their continual apostasy as shown by their rejection of the prophets, so as to set their killing of Jesus, though the promised Redeemer, as the natural outcome of an ungodly disposition. "Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Spirit: as your fathers did, so do ye. Which of the prophets did not your fathers persecute? And they killed them which showed before of the coming of the Righteous One; of whom ye have now become betrayers and murderers." Thus was an answer suggested to St. Paul's difficulty, how a crucified man could be the Messiah, and at the same time a spectacle of religious joy and strength presented.

Any voluntary death tends to move and draw men. For it suggests a conviction sufficiently strong to stand a very severe test, and therefore almost certainly containing truth ; and, furthermore, it is an example of courage, to which the human mind instinctively gives adoration. And one can readily believe that a man with lofty moral and religious aspirations such as St. Paul would be deeply affected by a martyrdom. But the martyrdom of Stephen stirred St. Paul all the more because it exhibited the religious joy and strength after which he had for long passionately yearned and striven ; or, rather, it made him understand for the first time what it was he had been desiring. He had never imagined aught so sublime in man.

The death of Stephen, it seems probable, helped St. Paul to appreciate the death of Jesus. And the death of Jesus, being an expression of faith and devotion to God together with strength inspired by God, engendered in him also faith and devotion to God. The religious will manifested by Jesus in His death, which had animated Him all his life long, becomes in one previously living in alienation from God an act of giving up his old life and yielding himself to God. And thus comes the paradox in St. Paul's theology—the death of Christ, though not in Him a death to sin, becomes for other men a means of death to sin.

Formerly, he thought that Jesus could not be the Redeemer because He died ; later, he saw that He became the Redeemer through dying. The death of Christ was for St. Paul the central fact of Christianity (1 Corinthians i. 18, 23, 24; ii. 2; Galatians iii. 1; vi. 14). It is reasonable, therefore, to think that it was one of the chief factors in his conversion. Probably the death of Jesus began to influence St. Paul's mind, through suggesting and moving him to self-surrender to God, before he formulated a doctrine upon it. Certain ideas and phrases are apt to produce thrills of mystical pleasure and longing in those who are tied down to an unromantic round of daily work. So perhaps to St. Paul, weary of unsuccessful attempts to obtain Divine favour and harassed by the importunity of the desires of the flesh, the thought of submitting to death for God may have brought a strange feeling of escape into freedom, of ecstatic self-abandonment, of entrance into reality, though why and how he could not explain. The Cross would speak to him of deliverance from his inquietude and distress and of bliss awaiting him. His energetic persecution of the Christians immediately subsequent to the death of Stephen looks like the effort of a man endeavouring to repel ideas which he feels are getting a hold of him. The words he seems to hear from Heaven, according to one account, "It is hard for thee to kick against the goad," indicate that he had been struggling against influences drawing him to Christianity.

The narrative of the conversion itself is as of one being suddenly overwhelmed by some power from the unseen world. But earthly circumstances, accompanied perhaps by hardly perceptible heavenly influence, prepare the soul for the sudden inrush of the Spirit of God. And St. Paul was doubtless prepared in some such way as described above for that which befell him on the road to Damascus. The light and the voice can be paralleled from other religious experiences.[1] The violence of the transition is indicated by the stupor and blindness which followed. But we may judge that he did not reach the height of his experience of atonement till long after his conversion. His subsequent life was one long process of getting to "know Christ and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, becoming conformed unto His death."

Sometimes St. Paul writes as if the death of Jesus Christ, and sometimes as if the death and resurrection together, were the Divine instrument in man's salvation. Probably it was not till much later that he arrived at his highest estimate of the resurrection. But from the first it would signify at least this, that the death of Jesus did not mark Him out as an impostor, but He was one beloved of God. Indeed, such a remarkable miracle would point to His being the Messiah (*vide* Romans i. 4). Later the resurrection seemed to him somehow connected with the new life into which the adherent of Christ entered. But, in so far as it merely marked him out as the Messiah, it would aid in producing that self-surrender to God which conditioned the experience of atonement.

---

[1] For "light" *vide* W. James, *op. cit.*, pp. 250–53. President Finney writes: "All at once the glory of God shone upon and round about me in a manner almost marvellous. . . . A light perfectly ineffable shone in my soul, that almost prostrated me to the ground. . . . This light seemed like the brightness of the sun in every direction. It was too intense for the eyes" (p. 252).

Dr. Bucke writes: "I was in a state of quiet, almost passive enjoyment, not actually thinking, but letting ideas, images, and emotions flow of themselves, as it were, through my mind. All at once, without warning of any kind, I found myself wrapped in a flame-coloured cloud" (quoted *ibid.*, p. 399).

In order to understand St. Paul's religious experience, we must bear in mind that his self-surrender to God went along with his conversion to Christianity. For that reason, indeed, the truth of Christianity is less inadequately represented in his experience than in Luther's, who arrived at atonement from the basis of ordinary Christian belief through realising one neglected element. The self-surrender was intensified by the fact that to become a Christian involved contempt and hatred from his old companions and the likelihood of active persecution, with perhaps death. To give allegiance to Christ might well seem to St. Paul a kind of voluntary death.

St. Paul's experience of atonement resulted from these conditions: he yearned to exchange antagonism to God for the favour of God; and he gave his allegiance to one who had died voluntarily as to the Representative of God. A Messiah who stood for a high religion and morality would tend, indeed, to produce improvement in his followers; but if he had not performed some signal act of self-sacrifice, he would not so readily have incited to that religious self-abandonment which conditions atonement. On the other hand, one who died for a good cause might, indeed, draw men to follow in his footsteps. But noble self-sacrifice, unless done in a religious spirit, does not commonly produce the sense of religious atonement. To that end the self-sacrifice should be performed with the heart turned to God—with devotion to God and trust in God. Now self-sacrifice which is a following of a Representative of God is naturally performed with the belief that it is acceptable to God, and that God will more than make good any loss incurred, and hence with devotion to God and trust in God. Thus, allegiance to Christ, who gave up His life for God, itself involving giving up life for God, brought about in St. Paul that self-surrender and self-devotion to God which is the condition of the experience of atonement with God. But the desire with which St. Paul started, namely, to have the favour instead of the disfavour of God, made the state arrived at seem predominantly a state of having been forgiven and actively loved by God.

His religious experience breathes in his doctrine. He taught that Christ died, not that men might escape death, but that men might die also; He was crucified, that men might be crucified; He suffered, that men might suffer. And even in this present life do men rise to a new life. "We were buried with Him through baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we also might walk in newness of life. For if we have become united with Him by the likeness of His death, we shall be also by the likeness of His resurrection." We are "joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together." "One died for all, therefore all died." "Ye died, and your life is hid with Christ in God." "I have been crucified with Christ; yet I live."

All this has a different ring from Luther's conversion and teaching. The "volitional" element is fairly strong, and yet the self-surrender is greater and more profound. St. Paul's conversion affected the soul more deeply; it was more positive, more moral, and involved a closer sympathy with Christ. It was more truly a fellowship of His sufferings, and a dying and rising with Him.

St. Paul, through self-sacrifice to the will of God in the following of Jesus Christ, came under the influence of the Holy Spirit, whereby he was quickened with spiritual life and lived in spiritual communion with God. Such was the atonement he underwent. And yet we must acknowledge that his doctrine imperfectly represents this. He expressed his experience by means of categories derived from Judaistic theology and pagan mystery-cults. It is doubtful whether he understood by being crucified with Christ through faith quite self-sacrifice to the will of God, and whether he perceived that the essence of the state of justification was the birth and growth in the soul of Divine life. In any case, in later times a considerably inferior type of atonement to St. Paul's clothed itself in St. Paul's phraseology.

We may find parallels to St. Paul's experience of atonement among the early martyrs and mediæval saints, notably, perhaps, in St. Francis d'Assisi. But Christianity of the reformed churches could doubtless furnish abundance of examples where the idea of following Christ is strong.[1]

We have, then, considered two types of atonement under Christianity: the Lutheran, in which the Cross impresses on a man the fearfulness of sin and the mercy of God, so that in horror of sin he opens his soul to the forgiveness of God; the Pauline, in which the Cross calls also to self-consecration to the will of God, with acceptance of suffering and loss.

---

[1] The following is an example, not precisely of atonement, but of spiritual union with God in consequence of submission to suffering. The subject is a Huguenot woman (W. James, *ibid.*, p. 288): "They shut all the doors, and I saw six women, each with a bunch of willow rods as thick as the hand could hold, and a yard long. He gave me the order, 'Undress yourself!' which I did. He said, 'You are leaving on your shift; you must take it off.' They had so little patience that they took it off themselves, and I was naked from the waist up. They brought a cord with which they tied me to a beam in the kitchen. They drew the cord tight with all their strength and asked me, 'Does

But a higher type of atonement is conceivable even than the Pauline. For St. Paul does not seem to have understood the relation between the self-sacrifice implied in faith in Christ and love to man. Certainly he spoke of love as the fulfilment of the law, and exalted it above all other qualities; but we do not read that he felt that the sin which kept him from God was primarily deficiency in love.

We look, then, for a form of atonement in which the self-surrender to God is predominantly self-surrender to the will of God as will for the good of all men to be accomplished by the charity of men. In yielding up his will to the Divine will the subject is aware that the Divine will is that he should labour for the good of others in love. This sort of self-surrender, more than the two already considered, is the adoption by the will of a certain content. The

it hurt you?' and then they discharged their fury upon me, exclaiming as they struck me, 'Pray now to your God.' It was the Roulette woman who held this language. But at this moment I received the greatest consolation that I can ever receive in my life, since I had the honour of being whipped in the name of Christ, and in addition of being crowned with His mercy and His consolations. Why can I not write down the inconceivable influences, consolations, and peace which I felt interiorly? To understand them one must have passed by the same trial; they were so great that I was ravished, for there where afflictions abound grace is given superabundantly. In vain the women cried, 'We must double our blows; she does not feel them, for she neither speaks nor cries.' And how should I have cried, since I was swooning with happiness within?"

will surrenders itself to God, only to assert itself in accordance with the will of God. The Christian embraces with enthusiasm the loving purpose of God for souls, loving them also himself, and in so doing is loved and spiritually quickened by God. This union with God is richer and more secure than that mediated through mere self-surrender to God, or that mediated through submission to suffering and loss as His will, or through self-consecration to the will of God conceived otherwise than as loving will for souls.

Yet this is not all. The will consecrated to the will of God as being loving will for souls expands into manifold excellence. For the loving will of God for souls is will for the production of various kinds of good. In the early years of Christianity this was hardly perceived. Then the work of love consisted mainly of two branches: first, preaching the Gospel together with religious and moral exhortation; secondly, the relief of distress. But with an evolutionary and organic view of humanity we must extend this work to cover the promotion of human evolution in the various parts and sides comprised by human nature—physical, intellectual, artistic, social, moral, religious—each of these having many ramifications. The fullest atonement, then, will come in response to the devotion of the life to forwarding the evolution of humanity in its manysidedness into the Kingdom of God. And since the individual assisting in this various work will develop the qualities in himself which he labours to make grow in others, he will acquire that mental life other than the moral and the religious upon which spiritual life in its fulness is based. Thus self-devotion to the will of God in His love to mankind will grow into that manifold human life which is the condition of the growing spiritual life. This is the full self-surrender of man, bringing about the full atonement of God with man.

Christ, then, effects the Atonement through revealing the truth as to God and man—the sin of man, the mercy of God, the will of God, the higher life of man in union with God. For this revelation, appealing to intellect and will and emotion, produces that state of soul in which men are under the influence of the Holy Spirit. But the truth given by this revelation becomes amplified as humanity grows, thus amplifying religion and the Divine life of man.

Jesus Christ provided the means for the union of God and man through evoking change in man. But did He also evoke change in God whereby God is the better able to deal spiritually with man? How far the life and death of Jesus contributed to such change in God we can hardly know now. But this at least is sure—since God loves souls He must enter into their experience of suffering and limitation, and in virtue of that intimacy in suffering and limitation He is victorious in love. And it seems that God's experience of human suffering and limitation would be most vivid through spiritual union with a soul spiritually alive undergoing it intensely—such, indeed, as Jesus in His career in Palestine.

Yea, if God be worthy to help men He must feel their pain and labour. And from fellowship in pain and labour lovingly undertaken of living being with living being throughout the Universe expands blissfully the loving union of all in spirit. Such is the atonement out of which life eternal springs.

## CHAPTER VII

# THE DOCTRINE OF GRACE

THE word "grace" (χάρις) in the writings of St. Paul, when used in reference to God, signifies either "graciousness" as a personal quality, or "dealings with mankind in the spirit of graciousness." In either sense it signifies the specific characteristic, as St. Paul conceived it, of the dealings of God with man "in Christ"—the characteristic of free favour, of bountifulness with no condition except faith. Under the law the relation of God to man—so St. Paul theorised—was that of legal payment for works; in Christ the relation is that of mercy and grace. "The law worketh wrath. . . . For this cause it is of faith, that it may be according to grace." "If it is by grace, it is no more of works; otherwise grace is no more grace."

But in course of time the word "grace" (*gratia* being the rendering in the Vulgate for χάρις) acquired a slightly different meaning—not so much the ethical characteristic of God in His dealings with men under the Christian dispensation, but rather those actual dealings themselves conceived of as an influence of regeneration and moral improvement and help. Indeed, the word "help" would be nearer the later significance of *gratia*, except that this Divine influence was sometimes thought of rather as a compelling force. St. Paul did, indeed, approximate to this later use when he wrote, "My grace is sufficient for thee." But *gratia* subsequently became the technical term for Divine influence on human character and conduct.

The influence of the Holy Spirit on the soul was, of course, a well-recognised fact among the early Christians. But the problems concerning the relation of this influence to human freedom were hardly noticed. The main interest of theology lay at first in the person of Christ and the relation of Christ to God, not in the manner in which man is affected by God through Christ. A large measure of freedom in man to accept or reject salvation seems to have been widely assumed, and some moral goodness among pagans of pre-Christian times was admitted; but the implications of this were not worked out. The doctrine of grace first became elaborated in the controversy between Augustine and the Pelagians.

It will be convenient for our purposes to consider the issues of this controversy, and to estimate the doctrine of grace put forward by Augustine; for, grave as are the objections to which the Augustinian doctrine is exposed, subsequent ecclesiastical speculation has done little more than modify it in certain respects. And it was, moreover, the outcome of the attempt to explain with the current ideas certain intense religious and moral experiences.

The controversy appears to have started by the monk Pelagius taking offence at a prayer in the "Confessions" of Augustine: "Give what Thou biddest, and then bid what Thou givest." This, thought Pelagius, implies a denial that man is free and able to fulfil the Divine commandments. He inveighed against the idea that man might be saved without effort of his own, as encouraging apathy and affording excuse for sin. He maintained that man never, at least in this life, loses the ability to do right.

Augustine, in reply, insisted on the depravity of man and his consequent inability to obey the Divine commandments apart from Divine grace. Pelagius admitted the necessity of grace, but very inadequately, according to Augustine; for he understood by "grace" natural endowments such as free-will, and external aids such as the Divine commandments and the example of Christ. Apparently he did not admit "internal grace"—that is, "the inspiration of love through the Holy Spirit."[1] Augustine, on the other hand, not only asserted internal grace, but maintained that the human race was so corrupted in consequence of the sin of Adam that no man could of himself do anything for his own salvation. Divine grace must do everything.

The controversy between Augustinians and Pelagians became involved with questions as to the efficacy of baptism and the supposed derivation of mortality from Adam. But what at present interests us is that Augustine was practically forced by the logic of his position to develop a doctrine of irresistible grace and predestination. We may now briefly state the Augustinian doctrine of grace and predestination as it emerged from the controversy, and as it was twelve hundred years later clearly and definitely stated by Jansen, Bishop of Ypres.

---

[1] Ecce quomodo vult intelligi adjuvari eos qui sub lege peccant, ut per gratiam Christi justificati liberentur, tanquam eis non sufficiat sola lex, propter nimiam peccandi consuetudinem, nisi Christi accedat, non inspiratio charitatis per Spiritum Sanctum, sed intuendum et imitandum in doctrina evangelica virtutis ejus exemplum ("De Gratia Christi," § 43).

In his etiam quatuor libris quæcumque pro gratia videtur dicere, qua juvamur ut declinemus a malo bonumque faciamus, ita dicit, ut nullo modo a verborum ambiguitate discedat, quam discipulis sic possit exponere, ut nullum auxilium gratiæ credant, qua naturæ possibilitas adjuvetur, nisi in lege atque doctrina (*ibid.*, § 45).

Man was created with free-will—so runs the doctrine—the power of doing good or evil as he chose—*possibilitas utriusque partis*. Even in this condition, however, he required Divine grace to enable him to do good. But it was grace which did not necessitate good action, but merely grace without which good action could not take place—*adjutorium sine quo aliquid non fit*. In virtue of his free-will man on one occasion chose to do evil. Thereby his will became corrupted, and incapable any longer of choosing good; and this corruption of will was transmitted by the first man to all his descendants. In consequence, this earlier kind of grace was no longer of avail; the will of man had become too bad to accept help merely offered to it. Wherefore the need of the redemption of mankind. Through the death of Christ a new kind of grace came into action—*adjutorium quo aliquid fit*—grace, that is, which compels the will to choose aright. Ultimately, no doubt, Christians will be restored to the condition of freedom. But during this present life the taint of inherited sin remains even in the converted, and is transmitted by them, through the act of procreation, which Augustine regarded as belonging to man's corruption, to subsequent generations.[1] And so no one can dispense with this compelling grace which comes through Christ. (Augustine also calls it "medicinal grace," in contradistinction to the grace adapted to healthy human nature, which was given before the fall.) Now, since the immediate cause of regeneration is this grace, continuance in sin is due to the lack of it. Hence the reason why some men are eternally saved, and some are eternally lost, is that the former receive the grace of God and the latter do not. It depends upon God, and God only, that these are saved and those are lost. His motives for choosing and rejecting are beyond human ken, and it were impious to inquire further. God has elected and predestinated some to salvation and some to destruction. Upon the decree of God depends the ultimate fate of every soul. As to the justice of this, nothing can be brought against God; for all deserve to perish, since all are not only infected with original sin, but actually sinned in Adam, as St. Paul (according to the Vulgate) declares in the Epistle to the Romans. Accordingly the lost are justly punished eternally; whereas the saved, deserving eternal damnation, owe their salvation to the Divine mercy ("grace" in the Pauline sense).

---

[1] In tantum enim obest [carnis concupiscentia] natis, ut nisi renascantur, nihil possit prodesse si nati sunt de renatis. Manet quippe in prole, ita ut ream faciat, originis vitium, etiam si in parente reatus ejusdem vitii remissione ablutus est peccatorum, donec omne vitium cui consentiendo peccatur regeneratione novissima consumatur: id est, ipsius etiam renovatione carnis, quæ in ejus resurrectione futura promittitur, ubi non solum nulla peccata faciamus, sed nec habeamus ulla desideria vitiosa, quibus consentiendo peccemus ("De Peccato Originali," § 44).

As infinity is not increased by the addition of a finite number, so is the injustice of punishing a soul everlastingly for the transgressions of a lifetime not increased by the fact that these transgressions were involuntary. But the idea of punishing at all for what is not within the power of the person punished to avoid strikes the mind as unjust, and we like not to believe God to be unjust. If some souls are predestined to a lower place than others in the final order of the

Universe, why call this punishment? Were it not preferable, as in one tendency of scholastic theology, to maintain that the perfection of the whole demands degrees of excellence in the parts, wherefore some souls, for no fault of their own, are rightly denied the chance of attaining the best kind of life? So would theology have avoided the cant of calling the heritage of an ancestor's offence punishment by God.

But it should be noticed that this doctrine of predestination follows logically from two premises: that man is able to contribute nothing towards his salvation, and that in each human life the eternal destiny of a soul is determined for better or worse. It were possible, however, to maintain internal grace and yet escape the conclusion that God purposely abandons some to everlasting loss without allowing them an opportunity to reform—namely, in the following ways: It might be supposed that man's nature, although corrupt, was not so corrupt as to be unable to respond in the least to internal grace. So Augustine, previously to his episcopate, not having been yet forced by controversy into rigid predestinarianism, believed that the act of faith whereby a soul accepted Divine grace was at least partly determined by the soul's own initiative—a doctrine which was afterwards known as Semipelagianism. Or it might be supposed that internal grace, acting at first compulsorily, restored the condition of free-will in this life, and that reward and punishment were assigned in accordance with the use made of the restored free-will, there being no punishment for any act done previously to the action of grace. Or, thirdly, it might be held that the irresistible power of grace would eventually regenerate all souls.

Augustine professed to base his doctrine on Holy Scripture. Jesus did indeed, according to the record, speak of "the elect," and of seats of honour in the Kingdom of Heaven prepared for certain men. But His general attitude towards humanity about Him gives the lie to Augustinian predestinarianism. He holds up children as examples; He commends the penitent publican; He bestows high praise on the widow giving her two mites as an offering for the Temple. In the parable of The Sower, He declares that the fruitfulness of the Word of God in those to whom it comes is determined by their characters, which, presumably, have grown to be what they are without the Gospel.

It was rather on St. Paul's writings that Augustinianism was based. But it must be borne in mind that St. Paul and Augustine dealt, in the main, with different problems and contended for different doctrines. St. Paul inquires how men may obtain justification in the sense of religious harmony with God, from whence all other blessings will flow. The answer he finds is that they may obtain it through faith in the crucified and risen Jesus conceived of as the Representative of God, or through faith in God as manifested in the crucified and risen Jesus. Augustine inquires how men may be morally good, so as to obtain eternal life. The answer he finds is that they are made so through the compelling influence of God on their souls. Incidentally they may both deal to some extent with the same questions and give approximately the same answers, but their starting-points and their main conclusions are diverse. They come into contact in this way: The justification which, according to St. Paul, is obtained through faith consists in spiritual communion with God, and hence involves spiritual influence on the soul, which is equivalent to the "grace" of Augustine's theology. And apart from this spiritual influence, justification would be little or nothing. But so far it is not determined, either whether the faith which conditions the spiritual influence is wholly or partly produced by such spiritual influence, or whether the spiritual influence, besides giving a man the power for morally good actions, also directly necessitates them or even promotes them otherwise than through his free choice. With regard to the first point, St. Paul writes as if faith were within a man's own power to exercise or not, although doubtless he thought of him as Divinely assisted. In one place he manifests a recognition of a certain goodness in heathen, which would be inconsistent with belief in the total inability of man in the state of nature to contribute anything towards the process of his salvation (Romans ii. 14, 15). With regard to the second point, St. Paul certainly thought of the justified as having it in their own power to carry out the will of God in greater or less degree, as these injunctions make evident: "Accomplish your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who worketh in you both to will and to work for His good pleasure" (power given by God is applied by man to the fulfilment of the Divine purposes). "If ye then are risen with Christ, seek the things which are above, where Christ is, seated on the right hand of God."

In one passage, indeed, St. Paul defended the right of the Creator to exalt some and to humble others irrespectively of their deeds (Romans ix. 14–24). But the subject of eternal salvation and destruction does not arise here. St. Paul is concerned in justifying to the Jews the fact that the Jewish nation, for the time at least, has been in the main excluded from the redemption. Accordingly, he points out that physical descent from Abraham has not always carried with it membership of the favoured race, and that the Israelites were chosen without regard to any works of theirs. And he contends that God has a right to do what He will with His own creatures, not doubting that He would will what is good and wise. But he proceeds to suggest that the present aversion of the Jews from the Gospel has its place in the plan of God, which is directed towards the ultimate salvation of Israel, and, indeed, of all nations. The question as to what happens to those Jews who die during their nation's apostasy he does not attack. He conceives himself as answering a Jewish objector who argues that God would never desert the chosen race ; he is not careful to follow out the ulterior consequences of his assertions. If St. Paul had meant Calvinistic predestination seriously, he would not have been content to introduce it thus indirectly.

The difference between the theologies of St. Paul and Augustine may be largely traced to differences in their characters and intellectual environment. St. Paul before his conversion had been an ardent adherent of Judaism ; Augustine before his conversion had been irreligious, worldly, and sensual. Consequently, the latter tended more than the former to regard non-Christian humanity as utterly depraved, and so incapable of contributing anything towards its own salvation. St. Paul had been brought up intellectually in Jewish theology, and hence he endeavoured to relate Christianity to the current ideas of Judaism—such as faith, merit, justification. Augustine passed his early manhood in an atmosphere of controversy between philosophical systems, among which Manichæism, with its doctrine of the intrinsic evil of the physical, held a prominent place, and hence he endeavoured to express Christianity in the terms of the antinomies of Divine power and human freedom, good and evil, spiritual and physical, with a bias towards regarding the human as bad.

Augustine relates how in his boyhood he robbed a pear orchard through sheer wantonness.[1] He soon fell into sexual immorality and rejoiced in his fall.[2] His main ambition was a worldly one—namely, to excel in the art of rhetoric.[3] When in later years he came to look back on his childhood and early manhood, they seemed to him wicked throughout. He had no sense for the innocence of children or the goodness of unsophisticated human nature. And the philosophical system of which he had been an adherent for about nine years encouraged him in this view. According to the Manichæan doctrine, the World was governed by two co-eternal powers of good and evil, to which latter the flesh and animal nature of man belonged. It is true that he afterwards adopted from the neo-Platonists the antithesis of the Manichæan view of evil—namely, that evil is simply the non-existence of good,[4] and also eventually attributed the sinfulness of mankind to one original misuse of free-will, which vanished with its misuse. But this change in metaphysical doctrine did not deeply affect his general attitude towards the facts of experience.

---

[1] "Confessions," ii., chap. 4. [2] *Ibid.*, iii., chap. 1. [3] *Ibid.*, iii., chaps. 3, 4.

[4] *Ibid.*, vii., chap. 12; "De Civitate Dei," ii., § 22; cp. "De Natura et Gratia," § 22: "Non est substantia peccatum."

The experience upon which Augustine's doctrine is founded was, briefly, this: the sense of inability owing to sinfulness of doing the Divine will, together with the sense of doing the Divine will under transcendental influence which accompanied faith in Christ. Pelagianism, on the contrary, rested on the normal experience of capability and performance of righteousness.

Certainly the Pelagians argued from a basis of fact which the Augustinians ignored or minimised. Man is undoubtedly conscious of being able to do better or worse with his own natural endowments. There is, indeed, wide difference in this respect. We may suppose Augustine to have been of a comparatively passionate and uncontrollable nature. But even in extremely degraded characters there may be found remnants of self-control and altruism. Man seems to himself to possess both freedom and a greater or less degree of natural goodness, and he not unreasonably believes that in so far as he uses that freedom to develop his goodness he prepares himself for Divine blessings. And any theory of salvation in which these facts of human nature are ignored must be seriously incomplete. Natural freedom and goodness really exist, and should be stoutly maintained. But Pelagianism had one great deficiency, on account of which it could not be adopted by the Catholic Church, and which, for all its greater reasonableness, determined its defeat by the Augustinian doctrine: it ignored the spiritual. Augustinianism did hold to the spiritual, though in a one-sided and inadequate manner, in asserting that, apart from transcendental influence of God on the soul, man could not please God. The religious sense of the Roman Church, that the spiritual must not be disregarded, caused it to take the side of Augustine against the Pelagians, while it afterwards endeavoured to smooth down the sharp edges and rough surfaces of the predestinarian doctrine. Augustinianism triumphed because it held to the spiritual, whereas the rival doctrine overlooked it.

But the difficulty of the controversy arose from a misconception which Augustinians and Pelagians held in common. Both viewed Christianity from the standpoint of the moralist. To both salvation was a condition which would be attained after this life by those who in this life had acted righteously. But if Christianity was not to be emptied of its essential significance, the spiritual had to be brought in somehow; and Augustine brought it in by asserting a Divine influence, which, indeed, he seemed to have experienced, producing righteous conduct. But we have learned to view differently the reality upon which Christianity is based.

The Holy Spirit quickens the soul with spiritual life in response to a certain state and attitude of the moral nature. It is true—and this is at the foundation of the Augustinian doctrine—that the spiritual develops and, so far as needed, transforms the moral when it has taken root. There is, indeed, considerable difference in the manner of arriving at the spiritual: in some the moral development reaches a comparatively high level before the spiritual is won ; in others the spiritual enters in response to a strong act of faith (religious devotion), while there are still vigorous perverse tendencies in the soul, so that the reforming work of the spiritual is greater. It is these latter who would emphasise, in Augustinian manner, the corruption of man and the Divine grace which makes man righteous. But the main function of the spiritual is not to make man obey the moral laws, but to constitute that new and Divine life with which all the rest of the individual's being is to harmonise.

Or—to take a more favourable view of the Augustinian doctrine—it might be said that what Augustinians really meant by the righteousness which is to be produced by Divine grace was not excellence of the moral or mental nature, but the new life itself, in which the spiritual and the mental coalesce. For the goodness which is essential to the Kingdom of God is spiritual goodness—that is, the love in which souls have close communion with God and with one another, the mental life proceeding in harmony with and being permeated by the spiritual.

But the Augustinians, owing to lack of both spiritual experience and intellectual development, did not carry their analysis so far. It would be better to regard them as vaguely aware of a higher goodness which could not be had by men except through Divine influence. The doctrine of grace was the outcome of the sense that souls must be prepared by the Holy Spirit for Heaven.

We will now deal with certain subjects involved in the doctrine of grace : free-will, the supposed corruption of mankind, the share of man in bringing about his own salvation, the supposed limitation of grace to believers in Christ, the distinction of grace into external and internal, predestination.

1. In a conscious being actions succeed stimuli. But the stimuli do not directly cause the actions, but through the mediation of psychical processes. A stimulus gives rise to a desire, and the desire tends towards its satisfaction, and in so doing produces a certain action. Accordingly, the desire is a part of the causal process. It is possible to suppose that the desire is a mere epiphenomenon, so that the process would go on as well without it. But that would be a supposition contrary to instinctive opinion. We need have little hesitation in holding psychical existence to cause changes in material existence.

Now when a movement of the limbs is caused by and is in accordance with a desire, the being who so desires and acts may be said to be free in respect of that action. On the other hand, there seem to be grades of freedom. A being whose consciousness does not extend beyond present perception has a lesser freedom than one who through conception regulates his actions with a view to a wider range of circumstances. At the same time, the freedom of a normal civilized and educated man is far from perfect. His mind is composed of a number of cognitive and conative potentialities, mostly very partial and limited, of which but a small portion can be actualised in consciousness at once. In response to a stimulus one or more of these awaken, with a tendency to immediate action, which is commonly at variance with what would be the outcome of all the rational and moral principles of the mind working in combination. The mind can, indeed, be trained so as to function in particular situations fairly well in accordance with general principles of wisdom and goodness. But perfect freedom would consist in a consciousness of the fundamental potentialities of good in things, issuing in actions adapted to the circumstances of the moment. And such consciousness seems to belong to spiritual life.

We will treat of this at greater length. A person acts freely in so far as he acts in virtue of his reason and will. Free volition is causation through knowledge of the possibilities inherent in the condition of things. Freedom is the state of objectivity in consciousness—that is, consciousness acting according to the facts of the situation, or, in other words, consciousness determining itself for the realisation of the possibilities of value contained in the situation.

Free-will therefore acts with certainty. For with clear apprehension of truth and value, and with imperturbable volition towards value in accordance with truth, there would be infallible right action.

But this state of clear and unperturbed vision and volition is hardly realisable in a being with only mental consciousness. For that is necessarily piecemeal and intermittent and determined by instinct and habit. Yet we may hope for such a free-will in the wide and penetrating consciousness of which the beginnings of spiritual life in humanity seem to be an earnest.

Now we come to the question at issue between Augustinians and Pelagians : How is a man to become more moral? Immorality may be classed under three heads. There is the immorality of which the agent is not conscious as being immorality. There is the immorality where there is a slight consciousness of something better, without any serious effort to realise it. And there is the immorality against which resolutions are made that are unable to withstand the temptation when it comes in full force.

Now it is evident that improvement may be made with respect to all these without any unmistakable sense of Divine aid. A man may become enlightened upon the evil implications of conduct which he formerly thought innocuous, and his slumbering moral sense may be evoked. The experience of the consequences of immorality may transform an indolent awareness of wrong into active detestation of it. Likewise, after ineffective struggles against a temptation, horrible results may make the indulgence seem truly loathsome; and so the temptation which was once too powerful is easily resisted. Or a friend may fortify the feeble will and offer distraction at the moment of trial. Or the passions may undergo a natural decline. Or the frequent experience of failure may even incite to a more deliberate and powerful resolution that shall prove victorious.

On the other hand, in some cases the force of the temptation is so strong and the moral sense so weak or perverted that it is practically impossible that by human agency alone the man can overcome his vice, unless, indeed, through the cessation of the physical cause, or can advance beyond a certain low level of morality, or even escape thorough depravity and the consequent mental dissolution. And that fearful depravity may be cured by some power acting in response to religious faith has been manifested in thousands of instances.

Pelagianism is founded upon the undeniable fact that through ordinary human agencies, especially by strong effort of will, vice may be cured and the moral character developed. This fact Augustinianism did not sufficiently take into account. And certainly, discipline, example, healthy environment and occupation, exhortation, sympathy, affection, are potent forces in making men better. Even where there is little thought of religion the character may grow in strength and purity and tenderness. But there is also the contrary experience—that of immorality incurable by human power—which prompted the Augustinian denial of freedom of the will. Both kinds of experience, that of moral health and improvement in the normal human way, and that of immorality which defies any human remedy, must be taken into account in our theory of the power of man to become morally better. Both conditions exist, just as bodily health and the natural recovery from illness exist as well as the occasional incurability of disease. To some extent, then, each of the rival doctrines is valid, having been prompted by divergent moral experiences. But since a human being in the normal human condition can by the exercise of free-will in conjunction with other agencies make himself better, the Pelagian estimate of the natural will of man is in a manner truer than the Augustinian.

And yet in another way the Augustinian doctrine may be judged universally true. For from the Christian standpoint the moral character to be desired is such as to support an ample spiritual life. And while considerable moral goodness and beauty may apparently be attained through exercise of will and various influences in ordinary human existence, yet the moral character required for an ample spiritual life can, we may suppose, grow only under the operation of the Spirit of God. Indeed, the greatest saints have seemed to feel the Holy Spirit healing and purifying and developing them. And in order that the spiritual nature may grow and transform the rest of the soul to be in accordance with itself, it must be abundantly fed by the Holy Spirit. Indeed, the Holy Spirit will work to make the whole soul fit for the Kingdom of God. Perhaps a soul may grow by human agency to be almost anything, except to be pure and ardent love. That surely it cannot be till the love of God breathe through it.

2. We have already considered the doctrine of original sin. It was the product of reflection on the tendency to sin inherent in the normal human condition. We noticed various conceivable causes of this tendency and perceived that it has existed in different degrees.

Now, however, we have come to see that the righteousness essential to the destined life for humanity cannot come into being apart from spiritual grace from God. The sense of the total inability of unaided human nature to become as good as God desires underlay the doctrine of original sin. However good pre-Christian character may be, it is very far removed from the goodness ordained by God for all souls eventually.

Nevertheless, the doctrine of original sin was mistaken in its universal condemnation of mankind prior to the operation of Divine grace in response to Christian faith. The so-called natural state of man is not a dead-level of corruption. Such natural kindliness and honesty and self-control as were attained by pagans and are attained now by men with little or no religion are not without value. Though they cannot by themselves induce the new life, yet they have an indispensable function in preparing the soul therefor.

3. Augustinianism accepted the Pauline doctrine that the Divine grace which makes righteous is given in response to faith. Then arose the question, What determines this faith? St. Paul believed that the law given to the Israelites served the purpose of making men conscious both of sin and of their inability to escape from sin by their own unaided efforts, and so of driving them to the other means to righteousness—namely, faith. According to this, faith appears to be the outcome at first of the non-spiritual condition of man under certain external influences, especially the Mosaic law and the historical death and resurrection of Christ. But St. Paul occasionally wrote as if God inspires men with faith.

Certain ecclesiastics, known as Semipelagians, during Augustine's lifetime and later maintained that the initial act of faith arose from human endeavour, or at least sometimes did. In technical language, they denied the necessity of "prevenient grace." This opinion was abhorrent to Augustine, who regarded the whole human race as too corrupt to be able to contribute anything whatsoever towards its own salvation.

We have learned to think of the spiritual nature as supervening upon the mental, when the latter has developed so as to be capable of supporting it. Following out this line of thought, we regard faith, in its beginnings at least, as that act and attitude of the mental nature wherewith it invites the Holy Spirit to implant the spiritual nature. And so-called "unregenerate" humanity certainly displays what is near akin to the religious faith required by Christianity, as in self-sacrifice on behalf of kindred and fatherland, and devotion to leaders and geniuses, and religious zeal. And the parable of The Sower seems to indicate that the fruitfulness of the Gospel depends on the character of men which they had before they heard the Gospel.

It is difficult to determine exactly at what point spiritual grace begins to operate. But it is not to be denied that faith, however much inspired by spiritual grace, is to some extent at least the outcome of the character as it has grown to be previously to the conversion to Christianity. The natural conditions of human life serve to develop the capacity for and tendency to faith, which the teaching and historical death and resurrection of Christ calling forth, the Holy Spirit acts upon the soul. These natural conditions, and still more the teaching and career of Christ, are to be accounted the grace of God in a sense ; but they are not spiritual grace, or, in technical language, internal grace. On the other hand, the soul, as it grows spiritual, will become capable of purer and more intense faith. Nor should we exclude the idea of others than Christians having genuine spiritual inspiration and life, which prepare them for the acceptance of Christianity.

4. To strict Augustinians only true believers in Christ live under the influence of Divine grace ; all others are in a state of helpless depravity. To attempts to soften down the distinction between the state of nature and the state of grace they reply : *Christus gratis mortuus esset* ("Christ would have died in vain"). Augustine, however, makes an exception in favour of

the holy men of the Old Testament, contending that they were saved through prospective faith in Christ.[1]

Now in what senses may non-Christians be said to enjoy Divine grace? In order to answer this question we should consider that mankind from its beginning has been undergoing development under Divine control for a Divine destiny. As under Christianity there is Divine influence operative to produce the birth and development of new life, so apart from Christianity there was and is Divine influence operative to produce development whereby man should be capable of the new life. From this point of view, mankind has been growing continuously under Divine grace. On the other hand, there has been, as well as development, much degeneration and perversion, such as only the grace that comes through Christianity can effectively cure. Under the earlier grace humanity grew and grows so as to be capable of spiritual life, at the same time contracting horrible diseases, with which, however, the later grace is potent to deal.

If we count as Divine grace all the influences ordained by God to produce human evolution, we may find four kinds of Divine grace operative among non-Christians. Firstly, there are the natural conditions of human life—namely, the need for food and clothing and shelter, together with the available materials and the labour required for their production, childhood and procreation and death with the concomitant experiences, the intercourse of man with man and nation with nation, the visible physical environment, including land and sea and sky, mountains and rivers and animals and plants. Secondly, according to our theory of evolution, we may believe in the emergence into activity of hitherto latent qualities in man owing to Divine stimulation. The rapid development in certain nations of special characters—intellectual, practical, religious—may be attributed to Providence causing the unfolding of the nature of man in certain respects. Thirdly, to judge by the records of pre-Christian religions, there was some religious communication between the Divine will and human consciousness, whereby the growth of man was promoted and directed. It is hard, indeed, to think that all oracles and prophecy were based on delusion. Fourthly, that there was and is experience of the spiritual apart from knowledge of Christ, philosophy and art and mystical religion testify. The distinctive power of Christianity consists in its affording the one central principle of attainment of spiritual life in union with God—namely, self-devotion to the forwarding of the Divine ideal for mankind in love to God and man.

---

[1] Ea quippe fides justos sanavit antiquos, quæ sanat et nos, id est, mediatoris Dei et hominum hominis Jesu Christi; fides sanguinis ejus, fides crucis ejus, fides mortis et resurrectionis ejus ("De Natura et Gratia," § 51).

5. External grace consists of those Divine influences which reach the soul through the senses. Jesus in His teaching, life, death, and resurrection exercises external grace, since by means of these He through the senses stimulates to Christian faith and conduct. The rites and institutions of Christianity come under the head of external grace, also the normal influence of Christians inciting to religion and morality. The soul is acted on through the senses so as to be susceptible to spiritual influence. External grace prepares for internal grace.

6. On the assumptions that man has become too corrupt and weak to contribute anything towards his own salvation, and that God is omnipotent, the question arose, Why does God choose this soul and reject that? Why does He assign this one to Heaven and that one to Hell? Augustine and Calvin could only reply: It is determined by the inscrutable purposes of God, whose ways are past finding out. Who art thou, O man, that repliest against God? But this is to maintain Divine omnipotence at the expense of Divine love.

But on our view, how are we to account for the fact that certain individuals receive spiritual life, others live without aspirations beyond this mortal existence, and others fall victims to vices and perish horribly? If perfect freedom is compatible with perfect goodness, how comes it that God allows this loss and degradation of souls?

All this is part of the problem of evil. And evil we have seen to be due to the general manner in which the World comes into being—namely, the forms of reality emerging and developing in order from the lowest to the highest, so that the lower are apt to injure and pervert the higher. And so in the earlier stages of the evolution of humanity there arise perversions, which, however, are constantly checked and corrected, and when the spiritual becomes fully dominant they will cease to recur.

But we have a special difficulty now. We may become reconciled to the fact of evil, if we regard it as an inevitable incident in the growth of the highest form of life. But the idea that any souls should be absolutely destroyed by evil is both unbearable and inconsistent with our belief in the goodness of God. If the corruption is so potent as to destroy what is of infinite value—namely, a conscious being capable of everlasting life—it is infinitely worse than any sin and misery that hold sway only for a time.

We should notice, however, that the process known in ancient theology as election and reprobation is analogous to the process known in biology as natural selection. In both evolution is assisted by the tendency of superior developments to survive at the expense of inferior. The stronger stocks overcome the weaker in the struggle for existence, and in the human sphere morality and practical wisdom grow and extend themselves from age to age. The ostensible purpose in all this is the eventual production of good living beings. Temporary perversions and waste of life appear not to matter very much, as there is always abundance of healthy life to take the place of what is lost. Indeed, to some extent this evil even helps the growth of the good life. For in the animal world the struggle with inferior forms for the means of existence assists towards the growth of the superior. And in humanity the need of fighting sin calls forth virtue and intellect and religion.

Is, then, Providence indifferent or nearly so to the fate of individuals, being content to produce quality of life? We must, however, bear in mind that in this world the living being comes into existence and ceases to exist, whether it be low or high, whether it degenerate or progress, whether it leave posterity or not. Even the saints pass out of the world in like manner. Therefore we cannot argue that, because certain souls in their present lifetimes remain un-spiritual or even suffer moral degeneration, they must altogether perish or fail to obtain a better life hereafter. In view of the time occupied by the evolution of the race from mere animality to a rich spiritual life, we may judge one lifetime to be but a minute portion of the total period of the corresponding evolution in an individual soul. Now, as a species may degenerate and yet, as it were, from a sound core develop new life which replaces what is corrupt, so, we may hold, there is a sound core in morally corrupt souls, whence healthy character will eventually spring. With such a theory we may ease our minds in the face of the appearance of indifference in God to the corruption and degeneration of souls.

Predestination in the sense of Divine election of certain souls on certain occasions for certain tasks we may well believe in. History displays the Providential development and supernatural guidance of both individuals and nations to perform certain functions in the development of mankind. And, more generally, all those who receive Divine life may be counted as Divinely elected for special tasks in the preparation for and production of the Kingdom of Heaven. Predestination is essentially the Divine appointment of souls to various work in the fulfilment of the universal Divine purpose. And that purpose is the supreme good for all souls.

## CHAPTER VIII

# THE INSTITUTIONS OF CHRISTIANITY

CHRISTIANITY is a form of communion of man with God in which the Holy Spirit and the soul are in immediate contact. How comes it, then, that Christianity limits itself with institutions, such as the Church and the Sacraments? How do the mental and the spiritual come to act by means of the material and sensible? It is to be noticed, however, that other kinds of mental and spiritual energy make use of organized societies and symbols. The effort after knowledge, for example, produces organized societies of which the objects are the acquisition and spread of knowledge, and therewith ceremonies of initiation into these societies and distinguishing marks for those who have done good service for the truth. As the soul grows, religion becomes less and less restricted to particular sensible forms. Eventually, we may conjecture, human society will be identical with the Church, and the whole of physical life and the material world will be sacramental. But during the early growth of a moral and spiritual nature in an alien and even hostile environment, special adaptations of the environment for the protection and promotion of the new life could not well be dispensed with. Christianity must at first have organized societies specially for the furtherance of religion, and also symbols to reinforce the inner activities of soul.

### I. The Church.

Jesus commissioned His disciples to carry on the work of preparing mankind for the Kingdom of God when He was no longer with them in the flesh. Apparently for the more effective fulfilment of this task, they were to form a congregation (ἐκκλησία), the name being probably reminiscent of the congregation of Israel (Matthew xvi. 18; xviii. 17). This congregation was to have authority to settle moral and religious laws (Matthew xvi. 19; xviii. 18).

As time went on, the Christian Congregation or Church became more organized and consolidated. Membership in it assumed greater importance in the Christian life. St. Paul used the idea of the Church for the expression of his theory of social life in Christ, calling the Church the body of which Christ is the head (1 Corinthians xii. 12-27; Romans xii. 4, 5; Ephesians v. 23; Colossians i. 18), Baptism and the Lord's Supper being respectively the means of entrance into and of living membership in the body of Christ (1 Corinthians xii. 13, x. 16, 17). The Church is thus the embodiment of the growing spiritual life of mankind.

Then, after sixteen centuries had passed, we have the spectacle of numerous independent and, to some extent, mutually hostile religious communities claiming to be Christian. There appear two great churches, the Greek and the Roman, claiming strict historical continuity with the original Catholic Church, and also offshoots from the Roman Church, from whose ecclesiastical organization they had in different degrees severed themselves. And some of these seceding bodies themselves show little cohesion.

In view of the claim of the Church in the early days of Christianity, and of the actual history of the Church, we must inquire what the Church is. Is it visible or invisible? Is it essentially one organization, or may it consist of a number of independent communities? Is membership therein necessary for salvation, or is faith with the conduct that springs from faith sufficient?

On the ground that the Church is essentially one organization, as evidenced by Scripture, the claim of the Roman Church to be the one Church has been rested. For it has developed by a continuous process out of the one Catholic Church of the first few centuries after Christ, and the continuity has been guaranteed —so it has been asserted—by an uninterrupted succession of bishops, each consecrated by predecessors with the regular ceremony whereby the authority granted by Christ has been handed down. Certain, however, in episcopal churches that have seceded have disputed this claim, on the ground that in these other churches also the apostolic succession of bishops has been maintained. But it seems unreasonable to lay more stress on apostolic succession than on unity as a symbol of the true Church of Christ.

But is the claim of the Roman Church to be justified by Scripture? In opposition we may point to passages which indicate that salvation is granted to all who approach God through Christ independently of any society—for instance, the commendation of Jesus on all who come to Him and hear and carry out His teaching (Luke vi. 47, 48), His invitation to all the weary to come to Him and find rest (Matthew xi. 28), His promise of eternal life to all who make great sacrifices for the sake of the Kingdom of God (Luke xviii. 29, 30), and His sayings which imply that to do good in His name constitutes the doer a Christian (Mark ix. 37, 39-41). And to these we must add the frequent and variously expressed blessings in the Fourth Gospel on all who believe in Christ (John iii. 15, 18, 36; v. 24; vi. 35; vii. 38; xi. 25, 26; xii. 44, 46; xiv. 12). From all this it might be inferred that the Church of Christ is by no means necessarily one and indivisible, but that any body of men which accepts Christ as the Son of God is thereby a church of Christ. And this conclusion is supported by the Christian characters and lives to be found among many and various religious communities, inasmuch as the sure test of value given by Jesus is the test by results: "By their fruits ye shall know them."

In order to solve the problem of the nature of the Church, we will endeavour to understand the causes of the changes that have taken place in the composition of the Church.

Christianity is a religion which is determined by the expectation of a certain good state of souls known as the Kingdom of God (or of Heaven). The religious attitude and actions enjoined are those which will best condition souls for entrance into the Kingdom of God. And upon Christians naturally rested the duty of inducing others to condition themselves, so far as this lay within human agency, for the Kingdom of God, thus assisting towards the realisation of the Kingdom of

God. Now for the more effective carrying out of this purpose it was desirable that Christians should co-operate intelligently. And so they organized themselves into a society for the work of preparing mankind for the Kingdom of God.

In the early years of Christianity any one who accepted Jesus as the Christ became as a matter of course a member of the Society of Christians, namely, the Church of Christ. For it would be no true faith in Christ which did not inspire to take part in the work of making others Christians. And it would be unreasonable not to be guided by those who had had intimate acquaintance with Jesus. To refuse to co-operate with the other Christians would argue either such selfishness as could not consist with true faith in Christ, or serious disagreement upon Christianity by a novice with those who had had the widest and deepest experience of it. And also for his own sake would the convert enter the Church, so as to come more under the influence of the regular agencies for the development of Christian faith and character. And the belief that the Church was the embodiment of the spiritual life in mankind, the beginning, as it were, of the Kingdom of God itself, must have greatly increased the sense of obligation for converts to belong to it.

Christianity in spreading came into contact with various modes of thought and religious influences, which, owing to the increased distance of many members of the Church from those most imbued with the original tradition, naturally gave rise to strange beliefs and practices. The main body of the Church found itself obliged definitely to bann certain of these which seemed antagonistic to the faith. Representative councils of bishops were appointed to test the new things by their compatibility with the canonical books, which were interpreted through a general sense of the meaning of Christianity. We may here notice how it was supposed to lie with the episcopate to maintain the tradition of truth from Christ Himself undiminished and unalloyed.

The original fervour of Christianity grew less, and the spiritual life waned. Therewith more value became attached to rites and organization and primitive record and dogma. Dogma was formed at a period when spiritual life was weak, but there was still sufficient sense of the spiritual for some, at least, to feel that certain theological theories were at variance with the essential Christian experience. But owing to the general vagueness of the religious consciousness all the disagreements could not be settled. Large bodies were forced to secede through differences in doctrine. Then there came a big division, ostensibly on account of a doctrinal dispute. Eastern and Western Christendom clave asunder because the one could not convince the other that the Third Person of the Holy Trinity does or does not proceed from the Second as well as from the First, the point at issue being held by both to be essential.

But what then happened? Was one of the churches the true Church? And if so, which? Or did there come into being two true Churches of Christ? But is not the Church necessarily one? And how could both be true, if they were in opposition to one another? Or is the idea of the visible Church a mistake, alien to the principle of Christianity?

In order to solve the difficulty we should consider how the division came to pass. The spiritual life had become weak, and Christians were concerned with the intellectual defences of their religion. They were endeavouring to understand that which they were no longer capable of understanding, and, in consequence, fell into disagreement. And, furthermore, having nearly lost hold of the primary, and being mainly interested in the secondary, they attributed to the secondary primary importance. And so difference on a point of secondary importance produced division and antagonism among those who bore the name of Christians.

The solution of our problem seems to be this: There was no true Church, because there was no true Christianity. The spiritual had entered into mankind, and had, in certain respects, considerably modified its ways of thinking and acting and feeling. But at this period the spiritual had died down, or become so weak as to be nearly ineffective. What remained was a system of religious ritual, of ecclesiastical organization, of morality, of belief together with a record of the primitive Christian experiences—mental growths due to the working of the spiritual on the mind of man after it had been developed in an earlier culture. The shell, the deposit remained, being the joint product of the influx from the Divine and of humanity as it had grown to be at the time. The spiritual life had disappeared, except for feeble flickerings, wellnigh suffocated by the alien human life into which it had entered, and which it had only partly transformed. A body of religious ideas and institutions had grown round it in response to its working, but this partook too much of the character of the world to protect and foster it securely. Indeed, the body, owing to its grossness, owing to the immorality and folly ingrained in it, helped to choke the new Divine soul of mankind. But the soul being enfeebled, or dead, the body broke up into mutually warring organisms, hybrids with certain features even in their distortion reminiscent of their ancestral Divinity.

And yet these soulless derivatives of Christianity had their function to perform in the education of mankind. The barbarian races which overwhelmed the ancient civilization came under the tutelage of the so-called Christian churches, and were educated in ideas partly derived from Christianity and in remnants of the Græco-Roman culture. It seems as if the higher developments of humanity were more easily brought into existence out of yet uncivilized races, educated by means of ideas derived from the ancient civilizations, than out of the existing civilized races. The old must perish to make room for the young, but passing on to the young something of what it has acquired and learned. The churches served to educate the young humanity so as to become fit for spiritual life in course of time. As the nature-religions prepared mankind for Christianity, so did the religion of the Eastern and Western Churches of Christendom prepare mankind for an ampler realisation of Christianity in an age to come. This religion was a kind of nature-religion itself, but, because of certain elements in it remotely derived from Christ and the Spirit of God, it was able to prepare mankind a little better than the old nature-religions had. There would, it might reasonably be hoped, be less to forget when the educational process should have been fulfilled, except, indeed, in so far as, the humanity being more vigorous, the spiritual should find a greater mass of antagonism.

Let us remark the results of the education of mankind conducted by the Roman Church. After the period of early childhood, known as the Dark Ages, there came a time of activity and production. The barbarian races, so long fostered and educated, blossomed and bore fruit. Monasticism, scholastic learning and speculation, the Crusades, Gothic architecture, religious poetry and painting—these were the outcome of the education of the Gothic and Teutonic races through the religion and culture which had been preserved out of the destruction of the Græco-Roman civilization and were embodied in the Catholic Church of Rome. But here and there during the Middle Ages came a rediscovery of the essence of Christianity, a true experience of the spiritual, a finding of the Divine through the Cross.

But the ecclesiastical life of the Middle Ages passed from ripeness to decay. The ritual and institutional element in the Roman Church overburdened the moral and inner religious elements. We hear of ritual practices being directed to obtain temporal objects, and of mercenary use of hierarchical power. It was natural, therefore, that the next great recrudescence of religion should cut itself loose from the overgrown and corrupt institutions of the Roman Church. Not only was there too much of the pagan and the worldly in Catholicism, but the very principle of the control of inner religion by the institutional element was irrational and inhuman. The Reformers apprehended that institutions must spring freely out of inner religion and be kept subsidiary. All the same, Roman

Catholicism had had its function in the preparation of mankind for the Kingdom of Heaven.

And so large numbers broke away from the Roman Church and formed independent communities. At the time of the Reformation the Protestants had in general the more vigorous and purer religion. Apparently there was among them a fairly widespread and vivid experience of the spiritual, whereas there is little indication of the spiritual among the Catholics at this period.

But if true religion lay with the Protestants rather than with the Catholics, what and where was the Church? The Church is the society composed of all true Christians, uniting because Christian faith and the spiritual life engender in them both the will to co-operate for the Kingdom of God and love of one another. There was no true Christian Church for many centuries because there was no true Christianity widespread among those who bore the name of Christian. Now in the first enthusiasm of the Reformation there was considerable sympathy and will to co-operate among Protestants, and to that extent there existed the Church, even though it lacked definite organization. But the religion of the Reformation was too individualistic to prompt to a universal visible combination, and owing to its imperfection it did not succeed in securing a permanent spiritual life, which would have produced before long a great association of the communities of Reformed Christians.

We may estimate the character of the Reformation by the dogma which expressed the movement, that which Luther called *articulus stantis et cadentis ecclesiæ* —justification by faith. It was to the Pauline rather than to the Johannine doctrine that the Reformers recurred. They were but little conscious of the spiritual nature and life, but rather of the movement of transition from the sense of bondage to sin to the sense of reconciliation to God and inner liberty. And this in part explains the lack of cohesion among Protestants. Their attention was concentrated on the first moment of the new life, in which the soul has to deal with God only, and not with the subsequent moral and spiritual growth, in which, uniting in common tasks, souls reach out to each other in love. But it was a meagre Paulinism that the Protestants adopted. Faith meant to them confidence in the forgiveness of sin, and justification meant the state of reconciliation to God which followed. Their doctrine of the Atonement—the vicarious suffering of Christ for man—indicates that to them the crucifixion was an event which effected something for human souls outside them, not a principle to permeate their lives. The Lutheran contempt for works made for a quietistic religion, a mere attitude of the soul to God. All this, though it may find support in St. Paul's writings, was not an adequate reproduction of his religion.

But the education of Western Europe begun by the Roman Church was carried on by the Protestant churches. During the Dark and Middle Ages Catholicism had been preparing humanity, by means of organized worship, ritual, moral discipline, religious doctrine, with the help of various institutions, for true Christian faith in some distant age. But the Reformed Churches discarded and minimised institutions. By what means, then, did they continue this education? They still maintained, for the most part, organized worship; but the main substitute for the instruments of religious education that they had dropped was the Bible. What institutions were to Catholicism, the Bible was to Protestantism. By putting men into contact with the purest expression of the religious life of early Christianity, the Reformers helped to prepare humanity for the strong, true faith whereby spiritual life should be secured. But the time for that was not yet.

And if we inquire for the continuity between the Reformed Churches and original Christianity, the answer is again, the Bible. Repudiating for the most part the religious growth that had taken place in the meanwhile, which under Providence had served mainly for the education of barbaric races so that they might grow up to appreciate Christianity, the Reformers linked themselves on by means of the Bible to the Christian life of the first century. The Bible, not the apostolic succession of bishops, was their real link with the Apostles and with Christ.

Incidentally this inquiry into the nature of the Church has thrown light on the manner in which the Divine life enters into mankind. It has gained an entrance several times and in many separate individuals and communities. Sometimes it has become bright and glowed for a while, purifying and invigorating human nature, and then it has flickered and died out. But these brief and scattered indwellings produce moral and intellectual habits and ideas which change the character of humanity, so that it grows in course of time capable of a permanent spiritual life. These habits and ideas are embodied in organizations, called churches, which undertake to ingrain humanity with them. However, the truths derived from the Spirit of God became mixed with human error, and horrible monsters of the mind put themselves forward as revelations from Heaven. Infinite blasphemies of Divine fiendishness sprang from the union of religious ideas and impulses with a distraught understanding, indicating, though, the forcible and revolutionary nature of the contact of the Holy Spirit with mankind.

The spiritual will gain permanent footing when, through its former temporary indwellings, some portion of mankind has developed in the corresponding mentality up to a certain point. And then, permeating the mental nature and developing it further, the spiritual will grow more and more. From the moment of the first secure birth of the spiritual in mankind, the Church will finally begin to exist, being the society for the production of the Kingdom of God, the body of Christ ever vitalised by the Holy Spirit, the Kingdom of God itself in embryo.

Catholicism educated mankind by means of its discipline and instruction and ritual. Then Protestantism carried on the education by giving to each man free access to the Bible and liberty to govern his own life. What is the next representation of Christianity, and of what sort are the next instruments and methods for the religious education of mankind?

As with the growth of intelligence the Bible becomes better understood, so do various religious bodies draw together and co-operate in instructing the mass of the people in the real meaning of Christianity, thus inculcating the faith and morality required for spiritual life. For some time there are independent churches working together, with little official unity, but with much common belief and purpose. They make a temperate use of institutions, while encouraging personal study of the Bible, having the aim of inducing all, so far as possible, to think out and carry out Christianity for themselves. And they are well aware that Christianity must grow, neither Scriptures nor church having adequately represented what it will be.

But even as it is thus restored, Christianity undergoes a great development. For the view of humanity as evolving in the main branches of its nature—physical, intellectual, moral, artistic, social, religious—engenders a strong demand for principles whereby humanity may direct this evolution of itself. And such principles does Christianity offer—namely, self-sacrifice, brotherhood, love, the Kingdom of God. By means of these humanity may synthesize and carry forward its various aspirations after ampler, healthier, nobler life.

And so the Church of Christ arises to draw together all human activities into one vast scheme of co-operation for the heavenly destiny of mankind. The Church will make the whole of human existence religious; it will call forth in each portion faith and hope and love; it will disclose the Divine significance immanent in every detail; it will make humanity capable of ever richer life in the Spirit of God.

## II. THE MINISTRY.

In the religion of Israel originally the head of every household might sacrifice; but by degrees the right to sacrifice became restricted to particular persons. These priests performed sacrifices whereby atonement with God was supposed to be obtained for the people. Like functions of uniting man and the Gods through special ritual acts were attributed to the priests in other religions.

One is inclined to wonder what the Jewish priests effected by their sacrifices. Could the will of God towards His worshippers have been altered by this kind of means? So the writer to the Hebrews: "It is impossible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sins." Still, sacrifices must have helped the growth of religious conscience.

Protests were made by the prophets of Israel against the belief in the efficacy of sacrifice: "To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto Me? saith the Lord. . . . Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before Mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well." "I desire love, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings." Yet these utterances were not generally regarded as altogether abrogating the Temple sacrifices.

According to writers in the New Testament, all those who believe in Christ are as priests of God (1 Peter ii. 5; Revelation i. 6). Each single Christian has direct access to the Divine; and so there is no need of priests, in the sense of mediators between God and men, any more. This is in accord with the teaching of Jesus Himself. He proclaimed the conditions of entrance into the Kingdom of God to be repentance, meekness, yearning after righteousness, single-heartedness, love for God and for man. The Temple, He said, was destined shortly to destruction. The task of uniting men to God Jesus gave, not to priests who sacrificed, but to disciples who preached.

After Jesus had gone from human sight, the main authority in the brotherhood of His followers naturally devolved upon those who had been His select companions. They were called Apostles. Others were afterwards added to the apostolate, qualifications being, probably, close personal acquaintance with Jesus and to have seen Him after His resurrection.

Other classes of officials came into being as the situation called for them. Deacons were appointed with the duties of "serving tables," so as to relieve the Apostles of eleemosynary work. It is probable that the later diaconate, to which belonged religious as well as charitable duties, and which constituted a stepping-stone to the priesthood, developed out of the primitive office of deacon.

Before long there were in existence officials called "Elders" (*πρεσβύτεροι*). The first mention of them is with reference to famine-relief provided for the Christians in Judæa, which the disciples sent "to the Elders by the hand of Barnabas and Saul" (Acts xi. 30). In the account of the dispute as to Jewish ordinances between Jewish and Gentile Christians, these Elders are associated with the Apostles as authorities in the Christian community which centred in Jerusalem. They are mentioned as receiving St. Paul on his return from his last missionary journey. Elders were appointed by the Apostles in every church. This office arose from the fact that the Christian community was at first regarded as a synagogue or congregation analogous to other synagogues or congregations among the Jews, which also had their Elders. The Elders in the Christian Church seem to have had at first two main duties—to rule and to teach (Ephesians iv. 11).

Along with these regularly appointed officials appears what has been called a "charismatic ministry"—that is, individuals entitled to perform some special function in virtue of Divine gifts. So St. Paul: "And God hath set in the Church, first apostles, secondly prophets, thirdly teachers, then powers, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, divers kinds of tongues." Prophets seem to have been highly esteemed, being associated by St. Paul closely with the Apostles (Ephesians ii. 20; iii. 5).

In the Church of the apostolic age there was no separate office of bishop. In the New Testament the elders and the bishops are evidently identical. Thus St. Paul couples bishops and deacons, without mentioning elders (Philippians i. 1). Further, in the writings of Clement of Rome "bishop" and "elder" are synonymous; but in the writings of Ignatius the bishop appears as a distinct official. Some time, it would seem, early in the second century the office came into being; and from thenceforth the threefold ministry of bishop and priest and deacon was held integral to the constitution of the Church.

The origin of the episcopate is historically obscure. The position of St. James at Jerusalem was practically that of bishop, though he did not bear the name; so also was that of Clement of Rome. To Ignatius one great value of episcopacy was the unity it could give to the congregation. We may conjecture that with the dying out of the Apostles a need was felt for eminent officials to take their place. But the episcopate was not precisely a continuation of the apostolate: the Apostles possessed general authority over the Church; bishops had a prescribed area of government.[1]

---

[1] In the Greek of the Ignatian letters the bishops are extraordinarily exalted (*vide* Lightfoot, "The Christian Ministry," pp. 85–7): "The

As time went on, the Christian ministry approximated more and more in fundamental nature to the Israelitish and pagan priesthood, the latter probably being more influential. But sacerdotalism was made possible by the dying down of the consciousness of the spiritual among the generality of Christians. During the Middle Ages the chief function of the priest seems to have been the celebration of masses, in virtue of which heavenly benefits were supposed to be, as it were, magically obtained for both living and dead.

The Reformers in general rejected the name *sacerdos* and the idea for which it stood. They asserted that the union of souls to God was not mediated through priests, but followed necessarily on faith in Christ crucified.

Episcopacy was discarded by the majority of the Protestants, the function of the bishop being in some cases transmitted to a college of elders. In other cases more congregational government was introduced. By some religious communities a ministerial order was dispensed with.

What, then, is the nature and function of the Christian ministry? It is evident from history that the precise form of the ministry was not ordained by Jesus Christ. The ministry has grown and varied from age to age in accordance with the quality of the religion it represented and the general state of knowledge and intelligence. Wherefore we may expect further changes in the future.

The Church is the society for the preparation of

bishops established in the farthest parts of the world are in the counsels of Jesus Christ." "Every one whom the Master of the house sends to govern His own household we ought to receive as Him that sent him; clearly, therefore, we ought to regard the Bishop as the Lord Himself."

mankind for the Kingdom of God. And, like other societies, it requires officials. Since the members of the Church are engaged in the provision of various human needs and in developing humanity in various ways, there must be certain among them who are responsible for the direction of the operations of the Church as a whole.

We may note three principal functions of the ministry. First, teaching and exhortation are required for the growth of Christian morality and religion in the members of the Church, especially in the young, and also for the conversion of non-Christians. Secondly, there is the conduct of common worship and ritual, which cannot conveniently be left to any or all indiscriminately. Thirdly, there is the management of the affairs of the Church in general.

So far we have considered the ministers of the Church as officials who act representatively for the whole community. But do they do more than represent the Church? Have they any special function in determining the character and corporate action of the Church?

The Church is a community of which the several members mutually influence each other in religion. Now the ministers appear to have the special function of maintaining the general tradition of Christianity. And, being the authorities of the Church, they would naturally also try to synthesize the tradition and the various new ideas contributed by the present members. To go back to the beginning, those who had been the immediate disciples of Jesus as a matter of course assumed a position of authority, from which they controlled and formed the mind of the community. This authority the Apostles transmitted to the ministers, who in turn passed it on to other ministers. And so the ministry, as long, indeed, as it is highly specialised, does not merely voice the common mind of the Church at the time, but itself controls and modifies the mind of the Church through its special contact with tradition.[1] All this flowed and flows from the fact that the revelation in the past and a body of religious ideas which has grown out of it have not been completely assimilated by the community.

The ministers, then, are the special guardians of the continuity of the Christian religion. And the manner of their appointment has been determined with a view to their fitness for this function. For the Church does not simply elect to the ministry by the vote of the majority, but candidates must be approved by existing ministers in order that a fair measure of acquaintance with and appreciation of the tradition may be secured. And the ceremony of ordination symbolises the transmission of authority to maintain the tradition.

Christianity grows through fresh revelations and through applying itself to the growing life of humanity. It grows through combination of old and new. Now in general, the ministry, or men so far as ministers, are pre-eminently the guardians of the old; while the laity, or men so far as laymen, bring new elements of experience whereby the old is developed.

But as Christianity and humanity grow, the distinction between ministry and laity will disappear; for the souls of men will enlarge so as to understand and value both the traditional in their religion and the fresh elements of experience which must be combined with it. And religion and the rest of human activity will intermingle and fuse together into an indissoluble unity.

---

[1] This is practically what Dr. Moberley contended for in "Ministerial Priesthood."

## III. THE SACRAMENTS.

The most prominent element in primitive religions was ritual. Not morality, nor belief, but the performance of certain religious acts was the chief means of influencing the God and of gaining something from him. The savage supposed inanimate objects to become possessed by unseen beings or instinct with the supernatural influence of some deity. Accordingly, rites in which material things were dealt with were the recognised channels of intercourse and transaction with higher powers.[1]

In Christianity morality, faith, and prayer have become of far greater importance than rites. Still, Christianity has its rites, the most important being those known as the Sacraments—namely, Baptism and the Lord's Supper. And it is incumbent on us to understand their significance.

---

[1] *Vide* Robertson Smith, "Religion of the Semites," p. 85: "The relations of a man to his fellow-men are limited by physical conditions, because man, on the side of his bodily organism, is himself a part of the material universe; and when we find that the relations of a man to his God are limited in the same way, we are led to conclude that the Gods too are in some sense conceived to be a part of the natural universe, and that this is the reason why men can hold converse with them only by aid of certain material things." And p. 151: "Moreover, the mysterious superhuman powers of the God—the powers which we call supernatural—are manifested, according to primitive ideas, in and through his physical life, so that every place and thing which has natural associations with the God is regarded, if I may borrow a metaphor from electricity, as charged with Divine energy and ready at any moment to discharge itself to the destruction of the man who presumes to approach it unduly."

Sacraments have influence as symbols. According to original usage, the word "symbol" means an intentional sign—that is, an intentionally given means of drawing an inference. In this sense speech is a symbol of thought, since through speech one gives another a means of inferring what is in one's mind. But the words "symbol," "symbolic," "symbolism" have acquired a different meaning—namely, as applied to sensible things and acts by which it is intended that minds should be not so much informed as impressed. A crucifix is a symbol of the willing acceptance of suffering and loss as an ideal for Christians. It does not give information of this, but enables those who look at it to feel this more, and so to carry it out more. The reason for symbols is that human beings are at first accustomed to have their consciousness exercised almost entirely on sensible objects; wherefore, at least until the mind is highly developed, ideas of what is more or less remote from the immediately sensible, in order that they may have as strong an effect as possible on the mind, normally require to be conjoined with something visible or audible, and perhaps tangible.

We must next notice a special class of symbols—namely, those which consist in sensible acts. These are especially appropriate to represent purposes and attitudes of mind. Instances from common life are: shaking hands, in which the union of hands symbolises the union of the persons' wills in some compact, or union in friendly feeling; and bowing, whereby deference is shown through the lowering of the head.

Now, where the symbol represents a purpose or mental attitude, as is especially the case with the acted symbol, since it serves to impress on the mind the purpose or attitude, it tends to produce or intensify that which it represents. The grasping of hands makes the persons feel more deeply than they otherwise would the sanctity of the compact ; the bowing of the head encourages the attitude of deference. One may perform some symbolic act with the deliberate purpose of strengthening in oneself some idea or purpose or attitude. For instance, one may daily kiss some memento of one much beloved, absent or dead, in order to help oneself in the performance of work which the loved one has or would have approved. Thus symbolic acts are signs that assist in producing and maintaining that of which they are the signs ; they are, in the old phrase, *efficacia signa*.

The principal sacraments of Christianity, Baptism and the Lord's Supper, are symbols which represent and assist in producing that which it is the main object of Christianity to effect—namely, the birth and growth of the spiritual life in humanity. Since this is conditioned by a certain mental state, the sacraments tend to the production of this mental state. This is, briefly, faith and love—faith developing into love towards God, which works itself out into love towards other souls. But the sacraments are more concerned with the production of the right religious attitude, and not so much directly with the moral condition. Both sacraments work by directing the mind to Jesus Christ, inasmuch as through allegiance to Him the required attitude of soul is brought about. Baptism symbolises and helps to produce repudiation of sin and faith in God, and so also Divine forgiveness and spiritual quickening, and thus is the sacrament of the acceptance of Christianity. The Lord's Supper symbolises and helps to produce the constant attitude of faith and love towards God and self-sacrifice for men and fellowship of Christians, and so also communion with God and spiritual growth.

Are these sacraments, as has been asserted, indispensable for salvation? Certainly we must not refuse to recognise that true faith and spiritual life have been apart from the sacraments.[1] Indeed, the strongest religious experiences seem not to occur in conjunction with the sacraments. That known as "conversion," for instance, is commonly determined by conflict in the soul between worldly desires and inclination towards Christ resulting in victory for the latter. Surely the converted undergoes in this process spiritual quickening and enters into spiritual union with God as vivid as that commonly procured by the sacraments.

But it is not at the seasons of intense religious experience and spiritual exaltation that the sacraments chiefly avail, but rather during the intervening periods of normal life. The newly converted soul requires to have in his sensible experience and activity impressive objects and moments which are mentally associated with his faith. Otherwise his sensible experience and activity will very likely tend to stifle and weaken his faith. It is for the ordinary continuous life that the sacraments, and, indeed, religious ritual and practices generally, are of most value. The consciousness of having symbolised one's self-consecration to God through Christ with a solemn ceremony, which is frequently performed upon others in one's sight, and the habitual performance of a solemn ceremony signifying the principle of Christian morality and religion and the spiritual life—these must greatly avail for salvation in the midst of hostile influences. Furthermore, a visible ritual serves to hold Christians together. The soul is apt modestly to hide its inner life. But the sacraments, being regularly performed, help Christians to realise the fellowship which arises out of their religion, and so enable them the better to work together at the common task of preparing mankind for the Kingdom of God. From this point of view, the sacraments are respectively the ceremony of entrance into the Church and the ceremony of continued membership in the Church. To this we may add that neglect of the sacraments, since they have been prominent in Christianity from the beginning, would imply such disregard for or contempt of the main stream of Christian life, or such religious individualism, as would hardly be compatible with the condition of soul which is the state of salvation.

---

[1] This seems to be implied in numerous passages of Scripture. We may remark especially the following: "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood ye have not life in yourselves," where by "flesh" and "blood" is intended the spirit immanent in the words of Christ, as is apparent from the explanation given subsequently: "It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I have spoken unto you are spirit, and are life." Dean Stanley in "Christian Institutions," p. 19, gives the following references to passages in the New Testament in which the highest blessings are pronounced irrespectively of baptism: Matt. v. 1–11; vii. 24, 25; viii. 10, 11; xii. 50; xviii. 35; xxv. 34–40; Mark x. 14; Luke xv. 32; John xiv. 3; Acts x. 4, 44.

But is it only as symbols that the sacraments are effective? May not the consecrated elements operate on the soul otherwise than in the recognised manner through the senses? Now psychical research has shown that material objects may become imbued with hyperphysical influence. To quote from W. F. Barrett: "Certain sensitives are said to be able to detect, or 'psychometrize,' as they call it, the influence left on material objects worn by an absent or deceased person. Whether this be the case or not, there are some startling and well-attested phenomena related by the older mesmerists which apparently indicate that some specific influence is left on a material object by the passes of a mesmerizer."[1] Miracles of healing seem to have occasionally involved such transmission of power through material objects, as this passage indicates: "God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul: insomuch that unto the sick were carried away from his body handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out." May not, then, the consecration of the elements in the Christian sacraments imbue them with invisible sanctifying influence? Experience, however, goes to show that this influence must be very variable and in general subordinate to their power as symbols.

The function of the sacraments may be estimated through the following survey: Salvation—that is, endowment with spiritual life—comes in response to a certain development and attitude of mental life—in brief, self-devotion to God and man. Were this development and attitude of soul to occur in other than Christians, it would suffice. But men have required to have the way of salvation definitely taught them. And, further, they have required to have that way embodied in a personality and career. And the mass of men have been greatly helped by certain who learned and lived before them, though partially and imperfectly, the way of salvation. Still further, they have required numerous organized influences of instruction and discipline to prepare them for due acceptance of the way. And they have required to have the way brought home to them by means of solemn religious rites. But, as in spite of all this they stumble and wander, they must receive punishment, the Divine punishment whereby they are corrected that they may become fit for Divine life. Meanwhile the Holy Spirit ever hovers over men, waiting to implant the seed of Divine life and unite them to God.

---

[1] "Psychical Research," Home University Library, p. 198. Cp. Oliver Lodge, "The Survival of Man," pp. 225, 226.

The sacramental element was small in the teaching of Jesus ; but it presently assumed large proportions. Later, as men began to lose hold of the moral and the spiritual, it grew and grew until the real meaning of Christianity became, as it were, a few precious grains scattered in a great mass of superstition.[1] The Reformation reduced the sacramental in Christianity to a small quantity, practically to Baptism and the Lord's Supper, divorced from a magical interpretation. And physical science has been a powerful agent in preventing the recrudescence of superstition.

---

[1] Prof. Harnack, in "The Mission and Expansion of Christianity," Eng. trans., vol. i., p. 233, writes of Christianity in the third century: "One feels driven to conclude that Christianity has become a religion of magic, with its centre of gravity in the sacramental mysteries. *Ab initio sic non erat* is the protest that will be entered—'From the beginning it was not so.' Perhaps. But one must go far back to find that initial stage—so far back that its very brief duration now eludes our search.

"Originally the water, the bread and wine (the body and the blood), the name of Jesus, and the cross were the sole sacraments of the Church, whilst Baptism and the Lord's Supper were the sole mysteries. But this state of matters could not continue. For different reasons, including reasons of philosophy, the scope of all sacraments tended to be enlarged, and so our period [the first three centuries] witnesses the further rise of sacramental details—anointing, the laying-on of hands, sacred oil and salt, &c. But the most momentous result was the entire assimilation of the entire Christian worship to the ancient mysteries. By the third century it could already rival the most imposing cultus in all paganism, with its solemn and precise ritual, its priests, its sacrifices, and its holy ceremonies."

But will the sacramental element in religion altogether die out? Probably not, we may opine, so long as Christianity has to struggle to maintain itself and grow in an alien environment. But in proportion as Christianity does transmute human life in accordance with itself, and the World-process is seen to be determined by the purpose of God, and Nature generally to be a manifestation of the Divine, so will the common experience and action of men become sacramental. Once they sought contact with the Divine intermittently in rites and sacred objects ; at last they will find it continuously and in the whole World.

Baptism, the ceremony of washing any one with water upon his acceptance of Christianity, doubtless grew out of the prevailing Jewish practice of baptizing proselytes and John the Baptist's use of the rite to symbolise repentance in preparation for the approaching Kingdom of Heaven. Jesus adopted the rite, as is shown by His giving Himself to John to be baptized. It is reported that the disciples baptized during the lifetime of Jesus, though the Master did not (John iv. 1, 2). Jesus Himself baptized men with a Divine vitalising force (Mark i. 8), and was baptized with suffering, and so were His disciples after Him (Luke xii. 50 ; Mark x. 38, 39).

The disciples, on receiving themselves the baptism of the Spirit (Acts i. 5), proceeded to use the rite of washing with water upon all converts to the new religion, with the words "in the name of Jesus" (Acts ii. 38 ; viii. 16). Upon the baptism with water was expected to follow the baptism of the Holy Spirit (Acts ii. 38), though this became specially mediated by the apostolic laying-on of hands (Acts viii. 16, 17; xix. 5, 6). It was as if the Holy Spirit streamed like an electric current from the Apostles into the converts, though, we may suppose, the latter, once so inspired, would normally thereafter receive the Spirit of God directly. Not only the Apostles but also elders commonly baptized, while laymen had the power to do so.

Baptism symbolises Christian repentance—that is, change from sin to faith. In virtue of faith in God through Christ, which involves abjuration of sin, the soul becomes capable of spiritual life. In particular, this faith involves contemplation of the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ. The sinful inclinations may in spite of faith continue and even sometimes take effect; but the soul, in its inner life being turned to God, is forgiven and remains subject to Divine forgiveness—that is, to the spiritual sanctifying power of God, so long and so far as faith remains. Baptism is a rite of washing, whereby purification from sin is symbolised. This purification takes place through the self-devotion of the soul to God in Christ, which is faith, and through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit that this religious act procures, the faith and the inspiration forwarding each other. The words of the sacrament, "I baptize thee in the name of Jesus Christ," or "I baptize thee in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost," indicate that the purification inaugurates into a life devoted to God according to the principles of Christianity. The baptized is said to pass from being a child of the wrath of God to being a child of the grace of God.

By "wrath" and "grace" in this reference must be understood, not the absolute feelings or ultimate purposes of God to men, since He loves even sinners and purposes to save them, but His rejection and opposition and His acceptance and inspiration, necessitated respectively by sin and faith. But Baptism, as has been remarked, is also the ceremony of initiation into the Church of Christ—namely, the society of men which exists for the preparation of mankind for the Kingdom of Heaven.

In the early days of Christianity Baptism was ordinarily administered upon the acceptance of Jesus as the Christ. This act would normally constitute a radical change of the general tendency of the life and would be accompanied by strong and deep emotion. As time passed two differences came into being in the condition of the Church which affected the nature of Baptism: men were not so much converted to Christianity as born into a professedly Christian environment; and the profession of allegiance to Christ became less revolutionary of the life and necessitated less real faith and self-sacrifice. It resulted that there was commonly no definite time in the life to which Baptism seemed specially appropriate. Two opposite changes took place in consequence: sometimes children were baptized before they were of an age to comprehend what was being done or what was required of them; and sometimes Baptism was postponed till late in life or even to within a few hours of death, with the objects of procuring forgiveness for as many of the sins of a lifetime as possible, and of minimising the chance of a relapse, which was considered very serious. Finally, however, the practice of Infant Baptism became the regular custom, the rite being supposed to operate magically, procuring salvation without any consciousness of its meaning in the baptized.[1]

Now the baptism of infants may seem at first sight indefensible, if the idea of magical efficacy be excluded. But the sacrament is appropriate to infants, considered as the ceremony of admission into the society designed to condition them for spiritual life. For the practice of such a ceremony should greatly help to impress Christians with the object for which the Church or any particular church exists. And when the baptized children grow up they may rejoice in the idea that they were consecrated to Christ in their infancy. Furthermore, Infant Baptism tends to the esteem of childhood as capable of being Christian, instead of as necessarily pagan. We should also allow the possibility of children being born with a spiritual nature that has been previously acquired and which will manifest itself with the development of the mind, Baptism being regarded as a recognition of the germ of eternal life.

Baptism taking place in infancy, it is apparently desirable that there should be another rite in which the children, now growing to a certain degree of understanding and moral responsibility and being at a critical period for the development of character, should be called on to consider the significance of the sacrament performed on them without their assent, and deliberately to give in their allegiance to Christ. Since the occasion is fixed, we can hardly expect that this ceremony should normally be accompanied by the most intense repentance and conversion in the lifetime. But it may well incite to an act of self-consecration, which, being followed and reinforced by abundant Divine inspiration, will have a great and enduring effect.

---

[1] That Baptism from the earliest times was thought to operate magically is indicated by the custom of baptizing for the dead alluded to by St. Paul.

The rite of Confirmation consists in the laying-on of hands by a bishop upon baptized persons, who declare that they ratify the vows made in their name at their baptism. It is specially associated with the working of the Holy Spirit. There was, as mentioned above, a common practice in the early days of Christianity for the newly baptized to be blessed by the Apostles, with the belief that the Holy Spirit was thus bestowed. It was, indeed, natural that, after a convert had been formally accepted, it should be thought desirable for him to be blessed by those who had stood in the closest relation to the Christ and were marked out as leaders of the Church, especially since the Holy Spirit was believed to be procured through personal contact with one highly inspired. Allegiance to Christ having been ratified, spiritual power to fulfil one's mission must be sought from those who possess it. But this apostolic blessing was apparently not a definite rite ; it is hard to think it was generally held to be in any wise essential, considering how little it is mentioned in the New Testament.[1] In less than two centuries, however, there had grown up, in part at least of Christendom, the rite of episcopal laying-on of hands as the due sequel of Baptism. At first it seems to have followed Baptism immediately, provided that a bishop was available. The custom of separating the two rites is of later origin, in or about the thirteenth century. The performance of Confirmation, together with a solemn exhortation by a reverend father in God, upon children at an impressionable age, before it is likely that their innocence has been corrupted, certainly seems well adapted to the religious capabilities of human nature.

---

[1] The Deacons were ordained with laying-on of hands by the Apostles (Acts vi. 6). Timothy was appointed to his office with the laying-on of hands by a college of elders (1 Timothy iv. 14). The reference in Hebrews vi. 2 is perhaps to such ordination to ecclesiastical office.

The Holy Communion, the ceremony of eating bread and drinking wine in order to receive Christ, had strong affinity with the prevailing Jewish sacrifice. The slaughter of animals dedicated to the God and the participation of the worshippers in the flesh constituted among primitive peoples the regular means of intercourse with the God and acquisition of the life of the God. Among the Jews, however, the participation by all the people in the flesh of the victim had at the rise of Christianity fallen into abeyance. Still, the idea of eating the sacrifice was still alive among both Jews and pagans, capable of practical activity should the occasion arise.

Since the death of Christ was thought of as the great sacrifice, taking the place of the old sacrifices, the chief Christian rite had to be a means of bringing men into relation with the death of Christ, so that they might obtain the benefits to be derived therefrom. Since they could not eat the actual flesh and drink the actual blood of Jesus, they ate bread and drank wine which stood for that flesh and blood. So St. Paul: "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not a communion of [participation in] the blood of Christ? The bread [loaf] which we break, is it not a communion of [participation in] the body of Christ?"

Furthermore, the Holy Communion is adapted to the Pauline and Johannine doctrine that Christ is born in the soul, constituting its higher life. The eating of the bread and drinking of the wine which represent the body and the blood of Christ seem fittingly to symbolise the reception of Christ by the soul. And this aspect of the Holy Communion is bound up with the former; for through participation in the death of Christ men receive of the life of Christ.

Yet again, the Holy Communion fittingly represents the unity of souls to be won through Christ. This is the unity of love—love first in mental consciousness, with the hope and slow growth of spiritual love. In virtue of this unity human souls are said to be members of Christ and to be all one in Christ. This significance of the sacrament seems to be contemplated in St. Paul's words in continuation of the above: "Seeing that we, who are many, are one bread [loaf], one body [seeing that there is one bread, we, who are many, are one body]: for we all partake of the one bread."

The Holy Communion, then, is the rite which symbolises the fundamental Christian experience, which has been variously expressed: through believing on the Lord Jesus Christ receiving the Holy Spirit, dying with Christ and rising with Christ, through faith in Christ becoming children of God and joint-heirs with Christ, through faith becoming members of Christ, through faith having the Son of God, which is the life, through the sacrifice of Christ entering into the new covenant in which God reveals immediately to the soul the Divine will; and which was thus expressed by Jesus: by loving and doing good to enemies becoming children of God, by losing the life finding it, by renouncing all for the sake of the Gospel gaining eternal life, by love to God and one's fellows entering into the Kingdom of God.

The inauguration of the Holy Communion was attributed to Jesus celebrating the Passover with His intimate disciples on the evening of His arrest. Doubt, however, has been expressed as to the precise intentions of Jesus in this respect. The accounts vary considerably. In the first place, only the record of St. Matthew contains the words "for the remission of sins." Certainly participation in the Cross would bring with it the Divine pardon. But in the thought of Jesus the forgiveness of sins was probably less prominent than the call to renunciation whereby entrance into the Kingdom of God is won. Great emphasis on sin and the forgiveness of sin is liable to make it seem as if the chief object of Jesus Christ were just to restore the moral relation of man with God which had been destroyed, instead of to open the way to a new kind of life.

In the record there is mention of a (new) covenant established through the blood, of which the wine is the emblem. According to this the death of Christ is the means whereby God inaugurated a new covenant with mankind ; and the sacred meal symbolises participation in that covenant. The words are reminiscent of the original covenant made by Jahwe with Israel at the foot of Mount Sinai (Exodus xxiv. 3, foll.), and also of the promise of the new covenant looked forward to by some of the prophets, which should involve intimate knowledge of and ready obedience to Jahwe on the part of all His people, as well as forgiveness of sins (Jeremiah xxxi. 31-4). The death of Christ being regarded as a covenant-sacrifice, the sacred meal, in which the food and drink are symbolically identified with the body and blood of Christ, the victim, is consequently the rite of participation in that covenant.

What, then, in this view is the significance of eating and drinking the body and blood of Christ? Apparently communion with the sacrifice.[1] As in an ordinary sacrifice the worshipper partook of the benefits through eating of the victim, so would the Christian partake of the benefits of the sacrifice of Christ through eating and drinking bread and wine which stood in place of the actual flesh and blood of Christ. The body and blood represented would not be the soul or spiritual nature of Christ, but simply His physical body and blood. There would be thus, so to speak, a twofold symbolism. One part of the symbol would, owing to the necessity of the case, be symbolically represented: the bread and wine would symbolise the body and blood of Christ, and eating and drinking the body and blood of Christ would symbolise entering, as it were, into the death of Christ, and so attaining communion and union with God. This entering into the death of Christ might be held to mean being moved by the revelation which the death of Christ gave both of the love of God and of the way of salvation, namely, self-devotion to God and mankind. We might speak of a real participation in the sacrifice, meaning that men are incited by the death of Christ to give up themselves, as Christ did in His death, to the cause of the Kingdom of Heaven. This interpretation brings the Holy Communion into connection rather with the doctrine of the Atonement: whereas by symbolising with the eating and drinking the reception of the Divine nature we bring it into connection rather with the doctrine of the Incarnation; indeed, the Sacrament has been called an extension of the Incarnation. But there would be no essential difference, since the two are complementary.[1]

---

[1] *Vide* Wendt, "The Teaching of Jesus," Eng. trans., 2nd ed., vol. ii., pp. 321–7.

According to two records (Luke xxii. 19; 1 Corinthians xi. 24), the bread is to be broken and eaten "in remembrance of Christ." The aspect of the Holy Communion as commemorative of Christ and His death has been welcomed by certain to whom the idea of a magical efficacy was abhorrent. But this view has called forth protest from those to whom the sacrament was not merely a commemoration of salvation but also a great means of appropriating salvation.[2] But there is no real antagonism between these views. Just because the Lord's Supper is a way of remembrance of Christ it is a way of obtaining Christ.

We may turn aside for a few moments to consider the question of the Real Presence of Christ in the Holy Communion. If Christ be really received through Christian faith, and if the Holy Communion be a sacrament of the central significance of Christianity, the Holy Communion must be an efficacious sign of the reception of Christ by the soul. If this be the truth of the matter, it is not so much that the bread and wine symbolise the body and blood of Christ, as that the reception of the bread and wine symbolises the reception of Christ.[1] In like manner in Baptism the sprinkling and washing with water symbolises remission of sins and new birth. But there is a further question, namely, whether Christ is really present in the bread and wine apart from, or at least prior to, the reception of them. In Baptism the water is not commonly supposed to be an efficacious sign of a spiritual reality, though, indeed, there is a prayer in some liturgies that the water be sanctified to the washing away of sins. It is rather that water is an integral part of the symbol, which is the washing or sprinkling with water, than a symbol in itself. On the other hand, in the Holy Communion not only is the eating and drinking the bread and wine symbolic of receiving Christ, but the bread is called the body of Christ and the wine is called the blood of Christ. One reason for the difference may be suggested: water becomes defiled in any effective washing and is accordingly thrown away, whereas a Divine agent of cleansing the soul could hardly be thought of as becoming defiled and fit to be thrown away. But food is not ordinarily spoilt or degraded through being assimilated by the human body. And Christ is believed truly to be taken into the soul, there to dwell. The belief, then, in a real reception of Christ symbolised by the reception of the bread and wine naturally carried with it belief in the real presence of Christ —in particular, of His body and blood—symbolised by the bread and wine. But can we attribute any truth to the belief in the real presence of Christ in the bread and wine apart from their being eaten and drunk? They may be efficacious signs of Christ in the sense that their very consecration may predispose the soul to receive Christ. We must also allow for their being charged with power affecting the soul otherwise than through the recognised senses, according to the evidence of psychical research mentioned above, so that it be more religiously inclined. But this is very far from being equivalent to the doctrine of the actual presence of Christ in the consecrated bread and wine. In fact, the doctrine of the local presence of Christ in the bread and wine has been judged heretical. Is not, however, the doctrine of the temporal presence of Christ at the moment of the reception of the bread and wine also derogatory to Christianity?

---

[1] On the idea of distinction in meaning between the giving (or breaking) of the body and the shedding of the blood *vide* Allan Menzies, "The Earliest Gospel," pp. 252, 253.

[2] Such was the controversy between Luther and Zwingli. The former held that the union of the body and blood of Christ with the elements is "such that believers and disbelievers alike, who receive the bread and wine, receive simultaneously the body and blood" (Fisher, "History of Christian Doctrine," p. 288). To the latter the Lord's Supper was chiefly a commemoration of the death of Christ. Still, he held towards the end of his life that Christ was truly present in it. (*Vide* Dorner, "History of Protestant Theology," Eng. trans. vol. i., p. 380, foll.).

---

[1] Hooker writes: "The real presence of Christ's most blessed body and blood is not therefore to be sought for in the Sacrament, but in the worthy receiver of the Sacrament" ("Ecclesiastical Polity," v. 67). How the communication takes place he regards as a question unimportant and provocative of dissension.

Allied to this is the question whether and in what sense the Holy Communion is a sacrifice. But what is meant by the word "sacrifice"? If a religious rite is meant which tends to draw together God and those who participate in it, certainly the Holy Communion is a sacrifice.[1] If death be considered essential, then also the Holy Communion is, or at least may be, a sacrifice, since it calls for death to the lower life, that the spiritual life may grow. Furthermore, it extends the sacrifice of Jesus Christ in the Christians' sacrifice of themselves with essentially the same motives and religious attitude as actuated Him. Perhaps, then, we should regard the Holy Communion as a more real sacrifice than the ceremonies of animal slaughter in ancient religions. If we include in the sacrament the religious act and attitude to which the manipulation and consumption of bread and wine are intended to incite, then the Holy Communion is a more real sacrifice, in that it is an act done, not by another for the worshippers, but by the worshippers, not primarily external, but internal and personal, not essentially material, but mental and spiritual. It is an offering of and intercourse with God by means of what is most vital and efficacious in man, namely, his very life and soul.

---

[1] Augustine's definition of sacrifice, as "any act that is done by a holy fellowship in order to inhere in God" ("De Civitate Dei," x. 5), is certainly wide enough to include the Holy Communion and other observances of Christians.

And, in particular, the Holy Communion is a sacrifice of thanksgiving, as the name Eucharist indicates.[1] Thankfulness is the emotional recognition of an act or acts as arising from goodwill in the agent. The thankfulness which should be active in the Holy Communion is the disposition to self-surrender to God, with self-devotion to the fulfilment of His will, prompted by the consciousness of His goodwill and love that is won from the self-sacrifice of Jesus and of all Divinely-inspired men.

---

[1] Originally the communicants made a ceremony of offering the bread and wine which were to be consecrated; and this was apparently regarded as a kind of bloodless sacrifice and a thank-offering. And the consecrated elements were given the name *εὐχαριστία*, perhaps as being food over which thanksgiving had been pronounced. Justin Martyr writes: *ἡ τροφὴ αὕτη καλεῖται παρ' ἡμῖν εὐχαριστία* ("Apologia," i. 66). *Vide* Harnack, "History of Dogma," Eng. trans., vol. i., pp. 209, 210, note. The thank-offering of bread and wine, or in later times of money in the course of the service, symbolises the thank-offering of the life of the communicants.

But in order to know the real mind of Jesus at the Last Supper, we should pay attention to the allusion to the Kingdom of God contained in all three Synoptic records, but not in the account given by St. Paul.[1] St. Luke thus begins his story of the last evening of Jesus with His disciples: "And when the hour was come, He sat down, and the apostles with Him. And He said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer: for I say unto you, I will not eat it, until it be fulfilled in the Kingdom of God. And He received a cup, and when He had given thanks, He said, Take this, and divide it among yourselves: for I say unto you, I will not drink from henceforth of the fruit of the vine, until the Kingdom of God shall come." This is one of those wonderful sayings of Jesus which, though composed of simple words referring to simple ideas, bring to harassed and weary hearts the sense of the Infinite.

It is the last evening before the crucifixion.

---

[1] Doubt has been raised, *e.g.* by the Abbé Loisy in "Les Evangiles Synoptics," chap. lxxxii., whether the whole account given by St. Paul is authentic, whether, indeed, Jesus did actually inaugurate a ceremony of eating bread and drinking wine, the bread representing His body and the wine His blood. St. Paul claims the authority of the Lord for his account of the Last Supper—'Εγὼ γὰρ παρέλαβον ἀπὸ τοῦ Κυρίου. But this may mean by direct revelation (not by tradition), as is indicated in these passages: "For I make known to you, brethren, as touching the gospel which was preached by me, that it is not after man. For neither did I receive it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came to me through revelation of Jesus Christ." "Though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now we know Him so no more." And does revelation always guarantee historical accuracy? On the other hand, there are grounds for believing that St. Luke occasionally altered the material he derived from the Gospel of St. Mark.

Separation and pain and death are at hand. And Jesus bids His disciples remember the Kingdom of God which He has preached. " Separation and pain and death are at hand," He seems to say ; " but we are linked together and shall meet again in the Kingdom of God. We drink this cup as a sign of the Kingdom of God, before we part on our various ways of labour and suffering. When we meet to drink it again, the Kingdom of God will have come."

The Kingdom of God is more than the indwelling Christ and the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. It is humanity transformed through and through by life from God and of God into heavenly power and beauty. It is the hope of mankind and the ideal towards which it grows. It is the one object for which Jesus and His comrades labour and suffer. And as they labour and suffer they gain ever more knowledge of its mysterious coming. For a while they are separated one from another, and undergo pain and death ; but they are immortal and will meet again with joy in the Kingdom of God. This labour and certain hope and fellowship does the Supper of the Lord symbolise.

The Holy Communion, then, is fitted to be the sacrament of the development of humanity, if men will accept it so, looking back to the evening which gave it birth. It is, thus understood, the expression of fellowship in labour for the good. It is the symbol of lives devoted with consciousness of the common aim to the Divine destiny of souls.

## CHAPTER IX

# THE END OF THE WORLD

CHRISTIANITY involves the idea of the Divine entering into humanity and transforming it. Consequently its theology will include a doctrine of the future action of the Divine on humanity and its implications. And since all the main processes in the evolution of humanity either lead up to or flow from this one process, this doctrine will be practically the doctrine of the future of humanity.

We have studied the preparation of mankind for its endowment with spiritual life, with incidental bad developments called sin, and the coming of the spiritual life, which has been chiefly through the morality and religion revealed by Jesus Christ, and the results of the birth and early growth of the spiritual, and subsidiary agencies for conditioning its birth and growth. The subject now before us is the growth of the spiritual in mankind, together with the destruction of influences antagonistic to it, and the changes in the rest of human nature which it has required and will require, from the time of Jesus onwards into the future.

How are we to know all this? The knowledge of the spiritual as it is should enable us in a measure to forecast its growth and the corresponding changes in humanity. We may gather indications of the future from the history of the working of the spiritual in the past and of the development and destruction of sin, using psychology where it is available. We have, indeed, before us the main factors of the future of humanity, though the one which we believe will become dominant is yet in its infancy.

In order to get a general grasp of the problem, it may be well for us to consider the doctrine of the last things as it grew up out of Hebrew prophecy into the forms in which it appears in the writings of the New Testament. For we shall thus be better able to decide how far the various elements of Christian eschatology really belong to the essential religious experiences of Christianity.

Hebrew prophecy was called forth by the consciousness of the iniquity of the nation. The early prophets exposed the moral and religious corruptness of the people, and predicted that Jahwe would punish them. We see in this the beginning of eschatology. Religious belief became through the prophets belief about the future. The Hebrew religion became imbued with the attitude of expectation—there was something wrong with the world which God would put right. Do we not discern a certain affinity between the Hebrew prophetic religion and the world-view which science has evoked—that the world is a process in which good is developed, that the good is, in fact, the " one far-off Divine event to which the whole creation moves "?

At first, however, the expectation reaches but a very little way. In the main it is this : Israel and other nations will be punished for their sins. Presently a new element emerges : beyond the punishment a happy future for the surviving righteous. Belief in Divine correction leading on to prosperity for a purified Israel afterwards is the principle of the prophecy of Isaiah, as in this passage: "It shall come to pass, that he that is left in Zion, and he that remaineth in Jerusalem, shall be called holy, even every one that is written among the living in Jerusalem: when the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof, by the spirit of judgment, and by the spirit of burning." The good state of Israel and mankind which will succeed the Divine judgment will far excel all prosperity since the days of the Garden of Eden. All nations shall then worship the Lord; there will be universal peace; Nature herself will be more kindly to man.

A striking element in the prophetic expectation of judgment is the preceding or accompanying signs in the material world. This is an example from the Book of Isaiah, though the chapter in which this occurs is thought not to be by him: "The stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light: the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine." Since the grandeurs of the heavens were believed to be a display by the Lord of His majesty and power, it was natural to expect that His day of judgment would be signalised by extraordinary happenings among the heavenly bodies. This expectation is found again in the eschatology of the New Testament.

In the earliest recorded prophecy Jahwe Himself is the Judge, as in the words of Amos: "I will pass through the midst of thee, saith the Lord." But soon there sprang up the expectation of a King whom Jahwe, after He had punished the wicked, would send to rule over the regenerated Israel. So Isaiah: "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful-Counsellor, God-Hero, Father-Everlasting, Prince of Peace." [1]

But towards the end of the prophetic period there entered two new elements into Hebrew eschatology: the righteous who had died would rise to partake in the life of happiness; and this life would be immortal. The earlier prophets do not seem to have been conscious of the need for such a resurrection and immortality. They were aware of present iniquity in Israel, they predicted a Divine judgment, and some of them at least looked forward to an era of righteousness and prosperity beyond. These expectations were at first irrelevant to belief about the destiny of souls after death. But as the conception of the state to which souls passed at death became more and more attenuated, and that of the future prosperous era of Israel more and more glorified, there naturally arose the impulse to believe that the righteous who died would live again in the future prosperous era. So to say, the increasing expectation of the future of the people came to supply the want produced by the decreasing expectation of the future of the individual.

In the earliest stages of the Hebrew religion the soul after death was thought to have a considerable measure of life and power.[2] The animistic view of the future life was prevalent, as is indicated by the story of Samuel's appearance at Endor to Saul. Probably the establishment of the worship of Jahwe caused the rejection of animistic religion. And so Sheol, the place of the dead, came to be imagined as a region of shadowy and unreal existence, as this passage among others indicates: "Wilt Thou show wonders to the dead? Shall they that are deceased arise and praise Thee? Shall Thy loving-kindness be declared in the grave, or Thy faithfulness in destruction? Shall Thy wonders be known in the dark, and Thy righteousness in the land of forgetfulness?" Since Jahwe was the God of Canaan, Sheol lay outside His influence. But when the Hebrew religion developed into strict monotheism, that was no longer so, as these words imply: "If I make my bed in Sheol, behold Thou art there." Wherefore the Lord could, if He so wished, bring up souls from Sheol. Perhaps the earliest surviving allusion in the Old Testament to the resurrection is this passage in the Book of Isaiah, which there is ground for believing to be an interpolation of about the fourth century B.C.: "Thy dead men, Israel, shall arise, and the inhabitants of the dust shall awake and shout for joy; for a dew of lights is thy dew, and the earth shall produce the shades."[1] The state after death still seems to be thought of as shadowy; the future happiness of the righteous will come through their resurrection into the new Jerusalem.

---

[1] *Vide* Prof. George Adam Smith, "The Book of Isaiah," vol. i., p. 136.

[2] *Vide* R. H. Charles, "Eschatology," p. 82 and foll.

We see here the apprehension just starting of a great cosmic problem. Elsewhere, indeed, the problem had been apprehended and a solution propounded. But this is the first emergence of the same in the theological development which is traceable from the Hebrew religion, through the Christianity of the New Testament, through the doctrines of the patristic epoch, through scholasticism, through early Protestantism, to the free philosophy that was stimulated by the scientific discoveries of the nineteenth century. The problem in general is how to relate the expectation of glorious life for humanity with the worth of the human beings who perish before that expectation be realised. As it presented itself in the later prophetic epoch of Israel it was this: The chosen people of the Lord is at present afflicted. One day, however, the Lord will be gracious, and will bestow such prosperity on them as was never known. But many righteous men, deserving well of His hands, have died and yet die, entering into an unsubstantial, lifeless existence. That was the problem, and the solution propounded was that the righteous shall come back to life, rising in bodies, when the blessedness commences. That there was this problem was due to the fact that the good has been looked for in the future of man's condition in this order of existence, rather than in any life invisible to the eyes of the flesh into which souls might pass after death.

---

[1] *Vide* R.H. Charles, *op. cit.*, p. 127.

These and other eschatological ideas of the prophets—namely, the gathering of the Gentiles to worship the Lord, the restoration of the dispersed of Israel, the Messianic banquet, the coming of Elijah as forerunner—were elaborated by the apocalyptists. In particular, we should notice some of the descriptions of the portents and disturbances which are to precede and accompany the judgment of the Lord, since there occur in them close resemblances to the predictions in the Synoptic Gospels and the Apocalypse of John the Divine:[1] "In those days there will be plague upon plague, wound upon wound, sadness upon sadness, evil rumour upon evil rumour, and many similar terrible punishments, one after another ; sickness, destruction, frost, hail, snow, fever, cold, stiffness, drought, death, sword, imprisonment, and every kind of sorrow and sickness" (Book of Jubilees xxiii. 12). "Then shall the earth quake and it shall be shaken unto the ends thereof, and the high mountains shall be brought low, and shall be shaken, and the valley shall sink down. The sun shall no more give her light, and shall be turned into darkness. The horns of the moon shall be broken, and shall be wholly turned into blood. And the course of the stars shall be brought into confusion. The sea shall withdraw into the abyss, and the wells shall cease, and the rivers shall dry up" (Assumption of Moses x. 4-6). "The son depreciates his father, the daughter rebels against the mother, the daughter-in-law against the mother-in-law. A man's enemies are his house-fellows" (Sota ix. 15).

---

[1] Quotations obtained from "The Doctrine of the Last Things," by W. O. E. Oesterley.

Among the antecedents in the Jewish apocalyptic of the eschatology of the New Testament we should particularly remark the development of the idea of the person and function of the Messiah. One passage in the Book of Daniel had probably much influence on the later treatment of this subject : "There came with the clouds of Heaven one like unto a son of man, and He came even to the Ancient of Days, and they brought Him near before Him. And there was given unto Him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him : His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." Thence seems to have been derived the title in certain of the apocalyptists for the Messiah, "the Son of Man." To the Messiah was attributed the judgment of mankind and the rule over the regenerated Israel, as in the following:[1] "And the Lord of Spirits seated Him [the Messiah] on the throne of His glory, and the spirit of righteousness was poured out upon Him, and the word of His mouth slew all the sinners, and all the unrighteous were destroyed before His face."[2] "And He sat on the throne of His glory; and the sum of judgment was committed unto Him, the Son of Man; and He caused the sinners and those who have led the world astray to pass away and be destroyed from off the face of the earth."[3] "And after that He [the Messiah] will slay him [the last evil ruler], but the remnant of My people, even those who are found in the land which I have chosen, will He protect; and His rule shall last continually, for ever, until the world, which is condemned to destruction, comes to an end, and until the times which have been referred to have been completed."[4] In this last passage it is implied that the Messianic rule will not be eternal, but that the righteous will eventually be transferred to Heaven.

A point of interest is that the Day of the Lord which was to usher in the age of blessedness was by prophet after prophet regarded as imminent. And the prophets were in this followed by the apocalyptists. One apocalyptist interpreted certain numbers in the Book of Daniel so as to bring the end within the lifetime of his generation. A succeeding writer, upon the disappointment of this expectation, invented a different interpretation, which would place the end a few years ahead.

---

[1] Quotations obtained from "The Doctrine of the Last Things," by W. O. E. Oesterley.

[2] "Book of Celestial Physics," lxxii. 2.

[3] *Ibid.*, lxix. 27.

[4] Syriac Apocalypse of Baruch xl. 2–4.

A great variety of doctrines concerning the resurrection and destinies of the righteous and the wicked were developed in later Judaism. It came to be generally believed that the righteous would live again in close fellowship with Jahwe. But different opinions as to the manner in which this would come to pass were recorded: the righteous would have a bodily resurrection into the Messianic kingdom; they would rise at the close of the millennium of the Messianic kingdom and be transferred to the abode of Jahwe; they proceeded direct to Heaven at death. All these opinions, be it remarked, are to be found in the New Testament. The fate of the wicked was variously conceived. According to the Book of Daniel (xii. 2) some of the wicked would rise and be punished; according to other writers all of them would rise; according to the majority of the apocalyptists none of them would rise. One view was that the wicked would be annihilated; another was that they would be consigned to Sheol (the abode, according to previous belief, of all the dead); another, that the apostate Jews would be put into Gehenna (the place of fiery punishment) (Isaiah lxvi. 24); another and later view was that all the wicked would be put into Gehenna. Some of this variety also may be seen reflected in the New Testament.

Now in what measure is the teaching attributed to Jesus in the Synoptic Gospels a continuation and development of the ideas of the apocalyptists? To begin with, the teaching in the Synoptic Gospels may well be viewed as predominantly an eschatology, or doctrine of the last things. The most prominent and pervasive idea in the teaching of Jesus, according to Matthew and Mark and Luke, was the Kingdom of God (or of Heaven). The Kingdom of God formed the theme of His earliest preaching, as we learn from St. Mark: "After that John was delivered up, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the Gospel of God, and saying, The time is fulfilled, and the Kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe in the Gospel." The Gospel or good news is evidently the coming of the Kingdom of God. Repentance and belief are called for in view of its near approach. On leaving one place He declares, "I must preach the good tidings of the Kingdom of God to the other cities also: for therefore was I sent." Again, by St. Luke His teaching at one time is summarised as having to do with the Kingdom of God: "He went about through cities and villages, preaching and bringing the good tidings of the Kingdom of God." Jesus is reported to have sent forth the twelve disciples to preach the Kingdom of God, and also seventy disciples with this message to deliver: "The Kingdom of God is come nigh unto you." On another occasion He spake to the multitudes of the Kingdom of God. Moral and physical states are commended or disapproved by Jesus as enabling or preventing entrance into the Kingdom of God. Many of the parables are said or implied to be about the Kingdom of God (or of Heaven). Might one not, indeed, call the Kingdom of God the one all-embracing theme of Jesus? Now the Kingdom of God is an eschatological conception. It is the good condition of things which God will bring about by means of judgment.

The components of the eschatology of the Synoptic Gospels correspond with the components of Jewish apocalyptic, here and there even to verbal resemblances. Be it remembered, we are not now inquiring whether all in these gospels is authentic of Jesus, or in what sense anything He said was understood by Him. We are just noting external resemblances.

The figure of the Messiah in these gospels corresponds in certain features closely with the Messiah of the apocalyptists. Points of resemblance are His name—the Son of Man—the manner of His coming—on (or with) the clouds of Heaven together with angels—and His function of judging mankind and assigning reward and punishment. The primary addition in the Synoptic Gospels to the representation of Him in Jewish apocalyptic is the specification of Him: Jesus is the Messiah. If we may trust the record, Jesus held Himself to be the Messiah from the beginning of His ministry. He was probably not recognised as such by the populace, and never openly declared Himself till the trial before the Sanhedrin.[1]

---

[1] Dr. Schweitzer's explanation of the betrayal and trial of Jesus, in "Von Reimarus zu Wrede," possesses great verisimilitude. Judas—so runs the theory—betrayed the Messianic secret, viz., that Jesus held Himself to be the Christ, to the priests. Since they had this evidence only of His claim, they could not charge Him with it. Consequently at the trial they begin by raising various charges which they cannot substantiate. When these fail, the High Priest finds himself driven to ask Jesus directly, "Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?" Jesus answers in the affirmative, and describes the manner of His future coming. Then and not till then had the priests sufficient ground for condemning Him. If it be asked how this became known, we may suggest that Peter heard it all and remembered

The most striking difference in the Messiah of the Synoptic Gospels from that commonly depicted by the apocalyptists is that He must suffer and die before He will come to judge the world. This qualification Jesus introduced Himself on the occasion when He avowed to His disciples that He was the Messiah: "And He began to teach them, that the Son of Man must suffer many things, and be rejected by the elders, and the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again." Was He driven into believing that He would only fulfil His Messiahship through first being put to death by experience of the manner in which His message was received? But the conception of a suffering Messiah has affinities in the Old Testament, especially in the picture of the suffering servant of the Lord (Isaiah lii. 13–liii. 12).

The other main components of Jewish apocalyptic have their parallels in the teaching of Jesus according to the Synoptic Gospels. There are predictions of violent disturbances both in human society and in Nature, as, for example, this: "Nation shall rise against

---

it. The account of the trial in the Synoptic Gospels does not strike one as an invention, but has the air of reality.

Another point of interest is that Jesus describes the manner of His coming thus: "Ye shall see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of power, and coming with the clouds of Heaven." Was this meant literally or metaphorically? Prof. Wendt in his book "The Teaching of Jesus" argues from the form of the saying in Matthew and Luke, "henceforth," *ἀπ' ἄρτι, ἀπὸ τοῦ νῦν*, that a gradual coming of Christ is intended. Now, since a gradual bodily approach is inconceivable, the whole must be understood metaphorically, as indeed is proper to the prophetic style: The Spirit of Christ from this time onwards will be seen gradually growing and triumphing in mankind. But can we be certain what Hebrew word *ἀπ' ἄρτι* and *ἀπὸ τοῦ νῦν* represent, or indeed whether the record from which Matthew and Luke drew is here correct?

nation, and kingdom against kingdom: there shall be earthquakes in divers places; there shall be famines: these things are the beginning of travail." There will be also hatred and violence among kindred, according to these words: "And brother shall deliver up brother to death, and the father his child; and children shall rise up against their parents and cause them to be put to death." First comes tribulation, arising apparently in the main out of fighting and persecution: "Woe unto them that are with child and to them that give suck in those days! And pray ye that it be not in the winter. For those days shall be tribulation, such as there hath not been the like from the beginning of the creation which God created until now, and never shall be." Following that come portents in the sky: "After that tribulation the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall be falling from heaven, and the powers that are in the heavens shall be shaken."

A very important point of similarity between the eschatology of the apocalyptists and the eschatology of the Synoptic Gospels is the nearness of the end. It was expected within the lifetime of some at least of the generation then on the earth, as the following passages show: "The time is fulfilled, and the Kingdom of God is at hand." "Verily I say unto you, Ye shall not have gone through the cities of Israel, till the Son of Man be come." "Verily I say unto you, There be some here of them that stand by, which shall in no wise taste of death, till they see the Kingdom of God come with power." "Verily I say unto you, There be some of them that stand here, which shall in no wise taste of death, till they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom." After the prediction of the tribulation, the portents in the sky, the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory, and the gathering of the elect by the angels, come these words: "Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away, until all these things be accomplished." This is closely followed by the saying: "But of that day or that hour knoweth no one, not even the angels in Heaven, neither the Son, but the Father." But this need only refer to doubt of the exact time of the end, it being presupposed that it will occur within the lifetime of the generation. This is borne out by the injunction to watch that follows: "Watch therefore: for ye know not when the lord of the house cometh, whether at eve, or at midnight, or at cockcrowing, or in the morning; lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping. And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch."

The gathering of Israel—one of the elements in Jewish apocalypse—is merged in the gathering of mankind to judgment, which is thus described: "And He shall send forth His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other." "And before Him shall be gathered all the nations: and He shall separate them one from another, as the shepherd divideth the sheep from the goats." In this point the Synoptic Gospels are in line with one tendency of apocalyptic tradition, and develop it further—namely, that of minimising the distinction between Israelite and Gentile, and making righteousness the one subject-matter for judgment.

Another point of correspondence is the resurrection. But there is some ambiguity as to the resurrection of the dead in the Synoptic Gospels. The words, "When they shall rise from the dead, they are as angels in

Heaven," and the identification in the parallel passage of "the sons of God" with "the sons of the resurrection" seem to imply that only the righteous rise. On the other hand, in the concluding discourse on the Judgment in St. Matthew, since the righteous, presumably, include those who have died, the company of the wicked apparently also includes the dead. Certainly the wicked may survive death, as is evident from the parable of The Rich Man and Lazarus.

The Son of Man is to come suddenly on the clouds of Heaven: "As the lightning cometh forth from the east, and is seen unto the west; so shall be the coming of the Son of Man." "In an hour that ye think not the Son of Man cometh. Watch therefore, for ye know not the day or the hour."

The Judge of the world according to Jewish apocalyptic is rather Jahwe than the Messiah, though the latter is the Ruler of the new Israel. The saying, "Fear Him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell," and certain parables, indicate that according to Jesus also God is the Judge. On the other hand, the Son of Man is to be the Judge of the world, according to several passages: "I will profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye workers of iniquity." "Whosoever shall be ashamed of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man also shall be ashamed of him, when He cometh in the glory of His Father with the holy angels." "When the Son of Man shall come in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then shall He sit on the throne of His glory: and before Him shall be gathered all the nations, and He shall separate them one from another, as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats; and He shall set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left." The same seems implied in the parables of The Ten Virgins and The Talents.

The wicked are consigned to "the eternal fire which is prepared for the devil and his angels." This is "Gehenna, where the worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched." They "go away into eternal punishment."

To the righteous is said: "Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." And they enter into "eternal life." The idea of the Messianic Banquet found in the apocalyptists is adumbrated also in the Synoptic Gospels: "And I say unto you, that many shall come from the east and the west, and shall recline with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the Kingdom of Heaven." "I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's Kingdom."

So far the teaching of Jesus, according to the Synoptic Gospels, is a doctrine of the last things, such as occurs in the Jewish apocalyptic of the preceding two centuries, with the Messiah identified with the teacher himself, conforming quite closely to the normal type except for one great difference—namely, the declaration that the Messiah will be put to death before He fulfils His function. But there is very much more in this teaching as a whole. In two other signal respects it extends beyond ordinary Jewish apocalyptic.

First, the conditions of the individual's entrance into the Kingdom of God are very much more elaborated than in the Jewish apocalypses, being, namely, certain moral and religious behaviour and dispositions. We may summarise these conditions as follows: meekness, complaisance, unstinted generosity, placability, mercy, benevolence and love even to enemies, sincerity, yearning for the Kingdom of God, carelessness about bodily needs and comforts and adornments, trust in God (these three latter culminating in renunciation of wealth and ties of kinship and life), prolonged endurance of suffering occasioned by all this. The states and kinds of behaviour preventing entrance into the Kingdom of God are these: material wealth, retaliation, implacability, hypocrisy and insincerity, devotion to the acquisition and retention of bodily goods, religious self-satisfaction, religious half-heartedness and want of perseverance. Most of this moral teaching can be paralleled in the current rabbinical instruction, but mixed with dross, and weaker. In the gospels it is pure, and of greater intensity.

Secondly, in the Synoptic Gospels the Kingdom of God is represented as already existing in certain souls, as yet immature but growing. The Kingdom of God is compared to seed which, when sown, grows mysteriously, and is finally reaped. It is compared to a mustard-seed growing and becoming a tree. It is compared to leaven which leavens a great quantity of meal. The same aspect seems to be contemplated in the parable of The Tares. The parables of The Treasure Hid in the Field and The Pearl of Great Price indicate that the Kingdom of God is, in a sense, a present existence in the souls of men. The saying, "Whosoever shall not receive the Kingdom of God as a little child, shall in no wise enter therein," and the reply to the scribe who accepted the two great commandments, "Thou art not far from the Kingdom of God," seem to imply that a man might conceivably obtain the Kingdom of God as an inward possession during the existing condition of the world. Allied to all this is teaching indicating the possibility of a blessed and holy state of soul in this world or age; for instance: "Love your enemies, and pray for them that persecute you; that ye may be sons of your Father which is in Heaven: for He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sendeth rain on the just and the unjust. . . . Ye therefore shall be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect." "This man went down to his house justified rather than the other." This is the prima facie meaning of the declaration: "The Kingdom of God is within you" ("in the midst of you").[1] We may also notice in this connection the assertions that the conquest of devils indicates the presence of the Kingdom of God: "No one can enter into the house of a strong man, and spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man; and then he will spoil his goods." "I beheld Satan fallen as lightning from heaven." "If I by the finger [Spirit] of God cast out devils, then is the Kingdom of God come upon you." All this is not, as such, inconsistent with the expectation of the coming of the Son of Man and the Divine judgment of mankind in that generation. The parables of the growth of the Kingdom of God do not, as they stand, indicate a long period of evolution. Only, the Kingdom of God is declared to exist already in principle, more or less secretly, in particular, in the souls of the righteous or elect.

---

[1] We must beware of attributing ideas to Jesus on the ground of a single text. Interpolation, mistranslation from the original language into Greek, misplacement are possibilities to be contemplated. Only when a doctrine or habit of outlook is widely apparent in the record, and is expressed with the genius characteristic of Jesus, can we be certain of its authenticity. But there are special reasons for doubt as to this saying (Luke xvii. 21). In particular, it is addressed to the Pharisees, of whom it, presumably, would not have been true to say that the Kingdom of God was already in their souls. Hence *ἐντὸς ὑμῶν* has been understood to mean "in the midst of you." But some critics, notably Johannes Weiss and Alfred Loisy, have contended for another interpretation: "The Kingdom of God will be suddenly among you." But, as against the meaning "in the midst of you," it has been pointed out by Prof. Dobschütz ("The Eschatology of the Gospels," pp. 130, 131) that the natural phrase for this would be *ἐμμέσῳ ὑμῶν.* In our ignorance of the exact circumstances and manner of the utterance, it is unsafe to argue that the fact of its being addressed to Pharisees precludes the sense of inwardness.

Such, then, is the doctrine of the last things in the teaching attributed to Jesus in the Synoptic Gospels. But this doctrine, in its obvious meaning, was in one important particular proved by the course of events to be untrue. All these things were not accomplished before the generation in which Jesus lived passed away. Those to whom He spoke did not behold Him coming on clouds with power and glory, attended by angels. And certainly it was in this sense that these predictions were commonly understood by the early Christians, as is indicated by the following passages: "Repent ye therefore, . . . that He [God] may send the Christ who hath been appointed for you, even Jesus." "We that are alive, that are left unto the coming of the Lord, shall in no wise precede them that are fallen asleep." "Now it is high time for you to awake out of sleep; for now is salvation nearer to us than when we believed. The night is far spent, and the day is at hand." "Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand. . . . Behold, the Judge standeth before the doors." "The end of all things is at hand." "Little children, it is the last hour: and as ye heard that Antichrist cometh, even now have there arisen many antichrists: whereby we know that it is the last hour." "He that testifieth these things saith, Yea: I come quickly.

Amen: come, Lord Jesus."[1] The Synoptic Gospels contain predictions of an early return of Jesus in visible shape, with attendant marvels in Nature, accompanied by angels, to judge mankind and inaugurate the Kingdom of Heaven, predictions which were apparently commonly believed by the earliest Christians; and these predictions were falsified by the fact that the events did not occur within the time stated, nor, indeed, have they occurred since. But if the eschatology attributed to Jesus in the Synoptic Gospels has been proved to be untrue in this respect—or rather, let us say, to be symbolic and not representative of the truth—is not thereby a presumption created that in other respects also this eschatology is literally untrue—or symbolic?

Let us go to the heart of the matter, or so far, at least, as we have discovered the way. Christianity we have learned to look upon as the religion which of all the great world-religions is the most effective in conditioning in man the birth and growth of spiritual life. Now the coming of spiritual life, together with the concomitant changes in the mental and physical nature of man, was foreshadowed in ideas derived from primitive imagination about God and the World and mankind. In the Synoptic Gospels we find the coming life and its concomitants foreshadowed in ideas apparently derived from a then prevalent order of imaginative literature concerning the end of the world. Taken in its literal meaning, this prediction of the end attributed to Jesus has proved false in one prominent respect. But if we may trust religious experience, a new life did enter into human souls among those who took Jesus as the Revealer of God and of the way to salvation. Also, be it remarked, the Jewish worship, within less than a lifetime from the crucifixion of Jesus, was brought violently to an end, which might well seem a Divine judgment on the clinging to a religion which was a decadent offspring of the stock whence Christianity sprang, and whose adherents had for the most part opposed Christianity.

---

[1] *Vide* 2 Peter iii. 3–10 for an indication as to the nature of the ordinary expectation among the early Christians of the end of the world, and its disappointment.

After all, which is the more radical change: the descent from the sky of a supernatural being accompanied by portents of Nature, and an inauguration by him of a more moral and more prosperous life for mankind; or the springing up of a new kind of life in mankind, which transcends the human as the human transcends the animal? If we are to judge by essence, what actually occurred was a more radical alteration in the life of man than would have been the literal fulfilment of all the apocalyptic predictions of the gospels. For ere the generation had passed in which Jesus Christ lived, He did come again, if we may trust His followers when they said, "Christ liveth in me," and, "He that hath the Son hath the life." This advent of Christ into the souls of men was essentially a more real, more glorious, and ultimately more powerful advent than would have been any bodily return with visible splendours and physical might.

There came to the religious consciousness a sense of an approaching Divine manifestation; there occurred ecstatic visions of a judgment of mankind, of disaster and confusion; prophecy depicted the end of the world, and Heaven and Hell to follow. But actually there came to pass a quickening of mankind with Divine life, and along with this the violent ending of a religion antagonistic to it. The previous religious excitement and expectation were in a manner falsified; yet they portended something great—greater even than was looked for. It was the advent of the spiritual life that occasioned all that stir in the religious consciousness of man.

We have considered the eschatology of the Synoptic Gospels as it stands. It is a further question how the erroneous element originated. Have there been interpolations of Jewish apocalyptic ideas into the record of the words of Jesus? Did Jesus use the Jewish apocalyptic metaphorically? Did Jesus accept this language as literally true, being aware of an impending Divine transformation of mankind, but partially misconceiving it owing to His participation in prevalent modes of thought? Probably the explanation of the apocalyptic element in the record of the sayings of Jesus, so far as it is erroneous, is a combination of all three. There are indications that sayings of Jesus have undergone apocalyptic colouring.[1] It is also probable that some of the apocalyptic language was of the nature of prophetic imagery. But, indeed, there could not have been then nearly so keen an awareness of the distinction between metaphor and accurate statement as exists when the scientific method of search for truth is commonly pursued. The transition from one to the other, both in the prophet and in his followers, would take place almost unconsciously. It is also permissible to think that Jesus shared with His contemporaries erroneous notions about natural phenomena which would be reflected in His teaching. The revelation that proceeded through Him was of moral and spiritual realities and processes. But since these are in connection with physical realities and processes, the expression of the revelation referred to these latter also, and referred to them as popularly conceived. It has been given to later ages to discover the laws of physical phenomena, and to relate them rightly to the truth of the working of God on the souls of men. But we should not fail to observe that a considerable portion of the teaching of Jesus did not receive the mould of the prevalent apocalyptic, as when He gave His hearers to understand that some element of the Kingdom of God was already existing in the true children of God, being destined to increase and develop till the Kingdom of God came with power.

---

[1] *Vide* Prof. Dobschütz, "The Eschatology of the Gospels," pp. 79 and foll.

We now pass to make a brief survey of the eschatology of the rest of the New Testament. We find again the components of Jewish apocalyptic which occur in the Synoptic Gospels, together with some others—namely, Antichrist, the beasts, the battle of Harmageddon, Gog and Magog, the millennium. The Revelation of John the Divine is a book in the tone of Jewish apocalyptic, with Jesus as the Messiah, and with references to contemporary personages and government. Babylon seems to stand for Rome, and the beasts for Roman Emperors.[1] It may be described as an allegorical drama of the triumphant victory of the Lord God over the powers of evil, culminating in the world-judgment. It is a book of glories and terrors—cataclysms on the Earth, Heaven revealed in golden brilliance, and Hell opened to its lurid depths. The God of Righteousness overcomes the wickedness that has so long defied Him, while the Universe trembles with the majestic wrath of the Almighty. And the oppressed righteous are lifted up into the splendours of the celestial city, to rejoice for evermore. Righteousness triumphs. Yes, but what righteousness? Of the distinctively Christian ideas—forgiveness, self-sacrifice, love, life in the Holy Spirit—there is no mention. From the Divine inspiration which was active in Christianity many who took the name of Christian assimilated little, but were by it stimulated to religious imagination in the temper of the existing religious ideas. Many generations had to pass ere the new truth and life could be securely rooted and largely productive in humanity.

---

[1] Cp. Prof. Swete, "The Apocalypse of St. John," p. lxxxi: "If the line of interpretation adopted in the present commentary be accepted, the Apocalypse refers in terms which are necessarily obscure to Nero and Domitian as successive embodiments of the Beast; the Beast itself is properly the hostile World-Power which was identified with the Roman Empire, and personified in the first two persecuting Emperors."

Approximately the same eschatological outlook seems to be presupposed in other books of the New Testament; and there is a general expectation of a near end to the present world-order. Noteworthy is the prediction in the Second Epistle of Peter that the world will be destroyed by fire.

St. Paul's doctrine of the last things seems to have undergone some change between the beginning and the end of his Christian career. In the Epistles to the Thessalonians a Jewish type of eschatology is apparent. There will come the Man of Sin (Antichrist), and there will occur an apostasy. Then Christ will return and slay him with the breath of His mouth. " The Lord Himself shall descend from Heaven, with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we that are alive, that are left, shall together with them be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord."

All this is to be within the lifetime of some of those then living. Nothing is said as to a resurrection of unbelievers. On the other hand, according to the author of the Acts, St. Paul once declared that "there shall be a resurrection of both the just and the unjust." Later, however, he seems to have forgotten most of the ideas derived from Jewish apocalyptic. His interest centres on the resurrection, which will be for those who have died in Christ. He emphasises the connection between the resurrection of Christ and the resurrection of the body. He describes the great day of resurrection, when "the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." And then he enters on yet another phase of eschatological thinking. The union with Christ would take place at death. He longs "to depart and be with Christ." He declares that "we know that if the earthly house of our tabernacle be dissolved, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." The expectation of living till the return of Christ dies down. He even seems to contemplate a lengthy period of development of the Church. Israel, he declares, was first chosen by God as the organ of revelation. But now Israel was in the main apostate. But this apostasy helps towards the conversion of the Gentiles—perhaps through Paul and others being thereby driven to preach to them. But the faith of the Gentiles will in course of time engender a like faith in the Jews; and finally all Israel shall be saved. There appears, then, a tendency in St. Paul's mind away from the phantasies of Jewish apocalyptic towards the thought of individualistic resurrection for souls at death and evolutionary salvation for humanity as a whole.

In the Johannine writings (the Revelation not being counted among these) the ideas of Jewish apocalyptic are almost gone. In the First Epistle of John there is the word "antichrist." But it has become the name for unbelievers generally: "Even now there have arisen many antichrists." In the Gospel there occurs one passage in which is foretold a resurrection of both good and bad, followed by a judgment: "Marvel not at this: for an hour cometh, in which all that are in the tombs shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done ill, unto the resurrection of damnation." But this is out of harmony with the main tenor of the gospel.[1] Jesus apparently declares, according to this gospel, that He will come to fetch His disciples: "If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and will receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." "Jesus saith unto them, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?" But the characteristic view of the Fourth Gospel is that Christ is ever coming to human souls, that they are ever rising to eternal life, that they are ever being judged or passing out of the reach of judgment. To take a few out of many passages: "If a man love Me, he will keep My word: and My Father will love him, and We will come unto him, and make Our abode with him." "I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be perfected into one." "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath eternal life, and cometh not unto judgment, but hath passed from death into life. Verily, verily,

---

[1] It has been held by good critics to be an interpolation; also the words "at the last day," vi. 39, 40, 44, 54; xii. 48. *Vide* Charles, "Eschatology," pp. 370 and foll., and Wendt, "Lehre Jesu," vol i., pp. 249–51.

I say unto you, The hour cometh, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live." "Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep My word, he shall never see death." "Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth on Me, though he die, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth on Me shall never die." "He that believeth on Him is not judged: he that believeth not hath been judged already, because he hath not believed on the name of the only-begotten Son of God." "If any man hear My sayings, and keep them not, I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world." Beyond all this lies a fuller realisation of Divine life: "In My Father's house are many mansions." So also in the words of the epistle: "Beloved, now are we the children of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be." And all will be brought to eternal life: "If I be lifted up from the earth, I will draw all men unto Me." Even those who are religiously dead will hear the voice of the Son of God and be made alive. The gospel and epistle of John indicate spiritual experience by which one penetrates into the Divine workings on mankind which are distantly symbolised by the imagery of Jewish apocalyptic. One finds that the judgment and the coming of Christ and the resurrection are already in frequent process, now in this soul, now in that. The constant Divine correction of living human beings and their union with God in Christ and endowment with spiritual life are in a sense the awful and glorious and vital occurrences to which religious seers have looked forward. Yet there is hope of something beyond, of a great expansion of the life that has only begun to be. Such, then, is the Johannine eschatology, predominantly individualistic and of the inner life.

But, after all, individuals appear and disappear, while the race continues. The individuals have been to some degree made by those who have been before, and help to make those who are about to be. And so the race moves on and on, through fleeting human lives, somewhither. It looks as if it were the race rather than the individual which is the subject of development and has history and a destiny. Surely, then, there must be an eschatology of mankind as a whole? But how may the eschatology of the individual soul be related to the eschatology of mankind?

The New Testament provided a wide field for theological speculations concerning the last things. The end did not come within the time appointed, and the predictions of it had to be explained away. There have been periods in the history of Christendom when a near advent of Christ was expected by thousands. Disturbances, distresses, striking natural events have seemed to declare that it was the last hour ; and one eminent figure of evil repute after another has been pointed to as Antichrist.

The doctrine of the future state underwent some development. In view of the long wait there grew up the idea of Paradise, the abode of the righteous till the Kingdom of Heaven should come. The idea of Purgatory arose out of the natural feeling that many believers, escaping Hell by their true faith, were at death not pure enough for Heaven. But the Reformers got rid of the belief in Purgatory, partly because it had been prolific of priestcraft, partly because it was unscriptural, and partly on the ground given by Luther, that " it opposes the prime article which teaches that

Christ alone, and not human works, can release the soul."[1] The notion of a dual state of the dead, Hades and Paradise, intermediate between death and the Judgment, fluctuated with the notion of an intermediate sleep.

Variations being left out of account, the general eschatological doctrine that emerged was as follows: Some time suddenly Christ will appear; and forthwith the present world-order will come to an end. He will send the righteous or faithful to Heaven, and the wicked or unbelieving to Hell, allowance being made for heathen who have had no chance of believing. After death the fate of every soul is in effect decided; but all must wait till the great Judgment Day before they receive their reward or punishment.

But this was just a phase of Jewish apocalyptic in Christian terminology, with the date of the end, owing to its non-occurrence, indefinitely postponed. It was a remnant of a world-view that was born of certain religious agonies and hopes in an age of crude science and primitive mentality.

Strangest of all was the belief in the everlasting suffering of the wicked with which it was associated. Endless pain in return for a few years of wrongdoing! Of all Gods since the world began the Christian God has been represented as in effect the most unjust, the most cruel. Christian theologians have endured to believe the most evil destiny conceivable for others. One would imagine that no kind-hearted person who realised what endless torment meant could maintain his sanity for one moment with the belief that one being should so suffer. Suppose unspeakable tortures for the wicked for a long period—perhaps a thousand years

---

[1] Crippen, "History of Christian Doctrine," p. 239.

—that thought might be endurable to one contemplating all time and all existence. But it is horrible that any mind could for a second believe in endlessness of suffering for one creature. Of all iniquities the doctrine of eternal punishment is the greatest. It is the vilest sin that has stained mankind.

It is a strange phenomenon—this Christianity. The Gospel of the God who is love mingled with infinite callousness and the uttermost blasphemy of hate! And this is the religion which promises sure victory over evil passions and the attainment of Divinity and communion with God! What can be the explanation of it all? How has it come to pass that Earth's most lifegiving waters have joined their stream to the foulest and deadliest?

Let us conceive the matter thus. Christianity is not so much a system of Heaven-sent truth as the production of the minds of men when touched by breath from the Divine. The taste of Divine good greatly intensified their sense of right and wrong. And this resulted in a greatly heightened expectation of the due rewards and penalties. It is to be remarked that at first the moral sense was rather intensified than altered: men increased their horror of the recognised forms of wickedness, rather than changed their ideas of what righteousness and unrighteousness are. It is easier, on the whole, to quicken a conscience than to transform it. If one preaches an exalted goodness to a man at a low level of moral development, he will perhaps ignore the doctrine, but be more strenuous to fulfil the code of conduct which he has already. So it was with many of the early Christians. Thus, the kinds of sinners enumerated in the Christian apocalypse—the fearful, the unbelieving, the abominable, murderers, fornicators, sorcerers, idolaters, liars—are much what any educated Jew might have written. How different is the standard of good and bad implied in the words of Jesus! It has taken many centuries for the new conception of goodness to transmute both the moral standard and the theology of Christendom. Much of so-called Christianity has been little more than an intensification of the best Judaistic and Græco-Roman religion and morality, with the horror of the old religions, so to speak, raised to the power of infinity. Yet seeds of truth were planted, and have been sprouting and growing through the ages.

But part of the explanation of the belief in everlasting punishment is that the human mind was fingering a notion which it could not grasp—the notion eternity. The Israelites had felt the contrast between the fleeting things of human life and the eternity of Jahwe and all that belonged to Him. The Divine ordinances and the mountains were to the Israelites eternal. And religious aspiration sprang up for life of the eternal order of things; and, concomitantly, fear of punishment of the same origin. Afterwards in the Christian Church the emphasis was laid on the idea of endlessness in eternal life and eternal punishment. But owing to incapacity to grasp the notion of eternity the attempt to think endless pain did not absolutely overwhelm the minds of many Christians. It was comparatively "a tale of little meaning, though the words were strong." And so it came to pass that a long line of theologians and pious men held, or professed to hold, this doctrine of infinite cruelty and horror and blasphemy. Below a certain low stage of intellectual and imaginative development the belief that the wicked will be made to suffer without end may be an expression of a strong natural sense of right and wrong. Above a certain stage of mental development this belief would indicate a degree of hate and callousness that would be morally worse than flagrant vice. Christianity, however, came into the world in an epoch when even eminent intellects could only think the infinities vaguely.

But the fact that belief in the everlasting suffering of the wicked has existed so long and so widely incites to certain reflections. It forbids confidence in the general theological system of patristic Christianity. Certainly endless punishment did not form part of Catholic dogma; but the very existence of such a belief among professing Christians indicates that the moral and intellectual capacity of the Church was not adequate to any but very primitive theology. This is not to deny that the authors of doctrinal formulæ had true though limited intuitions of the consistency or inconsistency of certain theological speculations with the Gospel. But the expositions of their intuitions could hardly but contain crudities and absurdities. We, then, of a later age must expect to have to remake theology in the light of the science and the metaphysics and the ethics that have grown up since, the last being mainly the fruit of the teaching of Jesus.

That is one general reflection suggested by the belief in everlasting punishment. And this is another. The callousness and feebleness of imagination necessary to this doctrine must be such as to allow much cruelty and injustice in the dealings of man with man. Hence the social order of a race among which eminent men have only recently entertained this belief is likely to involve much suffering and degradation to the poorer members of it. Indeed, the stage of moral progress at which belief in everlasting punishment becomes impossible must be far below the stage at which horrible social injustices and conditions seriously inimical to the proper development of human life become impossible. And so, when a people is only two or three generations removed from the date at which this insane theology was finally rejected, the philosopher will probably be right in thinking that he is living in the midst of a tangled mass of inhumanities, at which future ages will shudder. And yet under Divine inspiration there may come rapid moral progress and great humanitarian zeal, considerably altering both common habits of mind and the social order in the space of a single generation. And then, since such is the condition of humanity under the influence of these iniquities, how glorious will be its life when righteousness bears sway ![1]

---

[1] One shrinks from the task of defending Jesus from the horrible suggestion that He believed in eternity of suffering for the wicked. But some such defence may be desirable against any who might, through attributing to Him this belief, represent Him as a most savage and insane fanatic. Let this suffice :—

(*a*) Only in one passage is Jesus represented as saying that the punishment of the wicked will be eternal (Matthew xxv. 46). Elsewhere, though, the agencies of punishment are said to be imperishable (Mark ix. 43, 48 ; Matthew xxv. 41). We should notice also the mention of eternal sin (Mark iii. 29) and the parallel passage : "Whosoever shall speak against the Holy Spirit, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world [age], nor in that which is to come." But we have to take into account the possibilities of (1) mistranslation from the Hebrew into the Greek, (2) assimilation of the oral tradition to Judaistic ideas, (3) a meaning of the word *αἰώνιος* other than strict "endlessness." With reference to this last be it remarked that *αἰών* means "age," and an age may come to an end (*συντέλεια τοῦ αἰῶνος*, Matthew xiii. 39). We may compare *κατάσχεσιν αἰώνιον* (Genesis xvii. 8), *θεινῶν ἀενάων* (Genesis xlix. 26), *νόμιμον εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα* (Leviticus iii. 17), "His rule shall last continually, for ever, until the world. . . . comes to an end" (Apocalypse of Baruch xl. 4). The word *κόλασις* requires a meaning of *αἰώνιος* other than "endless."

One meaning of *αἰώνιος* would suit its various applications in the gospels, and would also indicate a profounder way of viewing the

But across the whole array of eschatological doctrines —the Second Advent, the Resurrection, the Judgment, Heaven, and Hell—sweeps, irresistible and overwhelming, a mighty truth that has for centuries been gathering force—the truth of the cosmic growth of life, progress, evolution.

It appears that the history of this globe—and, indeed, of the solar system and the enormously greater stellar system also to which it belongs—consists of multitudinous interconnected processes, together making for the coming into existence and the growth of conscious

relation of the soul to God than an idea relating pre-eminently to duration. This meaning is "having to do with" or "springing from the Eternal." Ζωὴ αἰώνιος is, then, life that comes from the Eternal, and so Divine life ; κόλασις αἰώνιος is punishment inflicted by the Eternal, or Divine punishment ; αἰώνιον ἁμάρτημα is a sin which affects the relations of a man with the Eternal in a way that other sins do not necessarily. To enter into this last—Jesus, according to the record, says that blasphemy against the Holy Spirit is an eternal sin and is never forgiven. In order to understand this we must bear two facts in mind : first, a sin is not only an act, but a state of soul ; secondly, the forgiveness of sin by God is the restoration to, or the beginning of communion with God in spite of the continuance in some form of the state of sin, since, if the communion with God did not commence till the sin was wholly obliterated, it would be a right rather than a mercy. Now in the passage in which the unpardonable sin is spoken of, Jesus has been arguing with men who attributed His good works to the agency of Satan. It seems, then, that the unpardonable sin is the state of soul in which good is persistently seen as evil. Blasphemy against the Holy Spirit—that is, deliberate contempt and hatred of the influences whereby God seeks to turn men from evil to good—is unpardonable because it excludes the pardoning grace of God. It is, in contradistinction to other sins, eternal, since it affects more deeply the relation of the soul to the Divine and Eternal. But this does not exclude the possibility of the sin being, so to say, burnt out of the soul by an agency which is figuratively presented under the images of fire and worms. The contrast between forgiveness and non-forgiveness corresponds to that between the exaction and the remission of a debt Matthew v. 26 ; xviii. 34).

(*b*) A great religious teacher who held the doctrine that all or some of the wicked would suffer endlessly would not confine himself entities in ever higher forms. A certain development of the planetary system conditioned the birth and growth of organism. A certain development of organism prepared for the sensitive life of animals. Upon sensitive life succeeded in due course the intellectual and moral and emotional life of man. And Christianity points the way to yet a new kind of life, which it declares to be in some distinctive sense the life of the Eternal Source of all existence.

The human race began to be apparently more than

---

to a few references to it. His whole teaching would be little less than a reiteration or amplification of the theme that upon men's conduct and religion in this life depends an eternity of bliss or an eternity of woe. But in the teaching of Jesus we find no contrast drawn between the brevity of the period of trial and the infinity of the good to be won and of the evil to be avoided by the right behaviour during it, nor any attempt to bring home to men the absolute hopelessness to all eternity of escape from the torments of Hell when once they have commenced.

(*c*) The presentation of God as a loving parent is incompatible with belief in everlasting suffering. We may note especially the declaration that God benefits and loves the unrighteous (Matthew v. 43–8), and the parables of The Lost Sheep and The Lost Coin.

(*d*) The language of Jesus, taken literally, implies that all will enter the Kingdom of Heaven; only, that some whom one would expect to be sooner than some others will be later: "The last shall be first, and the first last." "Many shall be last that are first; and first that are last." "Behold, there are last which shall be first, and there are first which shall be last." This seems to have been a constant thought in His mind. Again, of all sinners He attacks the Scribes and Pharisees the most fiercely. But instead of saying that they will be eternally shut out from the Kingdom of God, He says that the publicans and harlots will go in before them, which implies that they will enter later.

(*e*) Neither in the gospel or epistle attributed to St. John, nor in the Acts of the Apostles, nor in St. Paul's writings, nor in the Hebrews, nor in the Epistle of St. James, nor in that of St. Peter (2 Peter being generally considered not authentic) is everlasting suffering mentioned. On the contrary, in the Fourth Gospel occurs the saying: "I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto Me." It is inconceivable that if Jesus had taught eternity of suffering for the wicked, His followers would have ignored it.

a hundred thousand years before Christ. And during that time it was evolving so as to be capable of the new life mediated by Christ, which we have chosen to call "the spiritual." Now, like as sensitive life has further developed organism, and mental life has further developed both sensitive life and organism, so does spiritual life further develop and transform mental life, with the promise of changing also sensitive life and organism. When spiritual life entered mankind it caused the development of new modes of thinking and acting and feeling. The spiritual, indeed, disappeared for a while. But from time to time it has returned, producing religious movements and inspiring humanitarian effort. And altogether there has come into being, in great measure owing to the spiritual both at the commencement of Christianity and subsequently, a number of interconnected processes of transformation of humanity. Morality and the prevalent standards and ideals of morality improve; degrading superstitions die out, and knowledge of the world increases; evil customs are uprooted, other customs are improved, and new ones expressive of a more humanitarian tone of mind spring into existence; social institutions are constantly being corrected and moulded by the developing morality. But this vast process of development, having already occupied many generations since Christ, seems likely to take ages for its fulfilment. It is true that the progress of the world seems to have been more rapid in its later stages; and we may expect further acceleration as the spiritual comes at last to take firm root and grow in mankind. But when habits and prejudices of long standing have been eradicated, and new relations of co-operative action for the common good have sprung up as vital links between man and man and between community and community over the Earth, human nature will surely have to develop mightily in body and mind and spirit, ere the ideal of immortality be realised. Vast stretches of evolution seem to lie before mankind away into the dim future. The wonderful life promised by Christianity will, like all the inferior forms of life, realise itself through a process of gradual and orderly evolution extending over many generations of mankind. That is the truth which must be the great principle in developing Christian eschatology.

The ancient prophets and apocalyptists were aware that the state of the world was not in accordance with the will of God: wickedness flourished, and the righteous were in distress. Accordingly, they expected that God would presently carry out His will: He would destroy the wicked and relieve the righteous. It was natural for them to believe that He would accomplish this suddenly; for so would there be a greater and more dramatic display of power. The manner of His entering into the world and working His will was conceived anthropomorphically: the Lord, or His Son, would descend from Heaven with a shout, and, accompanied by His hosts of angels, speedily slay the wicked, and then conduct the righteous into a new Zion. In course of time the happy state of the righteous was more idealised: not only were the special distresses of the time to be swept away, but also certain evils which attached to human existence under known conditions. The Christian apocalyptist thus writes: "God shall wipe away every tear from their eyes: and death shall be no more; neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain, any more: for the former things are passed away." The warfare of God with evil was to be prolonged over a considerable period of time. There would occur a number of great victories, culminating in the final conquest of Satan. But this was essentially only a glorification of the earlier eschatological conception.

We too are conscious that the present state of the world is not such as God could wish to remain, since there exist various forms of sin, and humanity is limited and tortured in many ways. And we believe that there is in store for mankind a far higher and more joyful existence than it has at present ; and we may even hope for the conquest in time of sickness and death. But all this eradication of evil and production of good will happen and is happening—part, indeed, having already come to pass—through regular processes extending over many generations.

The fundamental idea of all religious eschatology is that God shall destroy wickedness and enhance righteous life. This idea is as fully represented in Christian evolutionary eschatology as in Judaistic cataclysmic eschatology. The age-long quickening of humanity by the Holy Spirit at once develops righteous life and checks wickedness. Judgment is in truth the necessary concomitant of Divine incarnation. The same great process which makes for the development of higher life eliminates forms of life which are in antagonism to the higher life. Developing goodness sets itself to sweep the world clear of those perversions which degrade humanity and hinder its progress. And wickedness, when incited to oppose the purifying ardour of the saints, accomplishes the more rapidly its own destruction.

And yet with the evolutionary process there occur sudden judgments and Divine manifestations. So far the old cataclysmic eschatology was justified. Sins are wont to grow and gather strength with little hindrance, till on a sudden some fearful punishment is seen impending when it is too late to avert it. For instance, years of voluptuous living may engender terrible disease that causes death in a few months. Long waxing greed and luxury and cruelty of an aristocracy lead up to a rapid revolution. Formalism and priestcraft, after corrupting a church for many generations, provoke a vast popular resentment that results in a great schism. Sin blinds to the signs of the approaching destruction which is its inevitable entail ; and then the judgment takes place with tragic suddenness and power. And on the other hand, quiet moral and religious growth may lead up to wonderful religious revivals and self-sacrifice for humanity. The apocalyptic expectation of sudden Divine judgment and Divine manifestation does correspond in a measure to the facts of history and to the manner of the falling and rising of the individual soul. But these quick and tremendous events are just outstanding moments in continuous processes of development. They are the results of gradual movement that has gone before, and prepare for gradual movement that will follow.

Other elements of the ancient apocalyptic should not be condemned without consideration. It is conceivable, for instance, that convulsions of Nature may happen in connection with convulsions in mankind. The reappearance of the personal Jesus when humanity has reached a certain stage of spiritual growth is not unthinkable. Nor need we disbelieve in the existence of angelic beings, who may manifest themselves at times of upheaval to human sight. And meanings must be found for Heaven and Hell. But all these, in so far as they are real, must have their place in the evolution of mankind, in which humanity, being quickened by the Holy Spirit, develops in Divine life, so moving on to its ideal, which is the Kingdom of God.

But there is one important element in eschatology which must be greatly affected by the doctrine of evolution. And that is the resurrection. Now what kind of resurrection does this evolutionary eschatology involve? The Jewish apocalyptists looked for a near and exceedingly swift inauguration by God of a reign of righteousness and prosperity. And the souls of the righteous would be redeemed from the land of shades to partake in it. About a hundred generations had gone by since the world began, and there had been comparatively few in each generation who deserved to live again in the regenerated Israel. All the rest might be left in Sheol. But Christianity and science have vastly extended to the mind the history of man, both past and future; and they have also deepened his sense of his own ultimate value and exalted his aspirations.

Not only one hundred, but ten thousand generations have fled since the human race began to be. Not in a lifetime will the end come, but man will evolve through a vast future. Not some few, but all souls are to attain immortality. Not the righteousness of the Law will suffice, but the love of which the Cross is the emblem. No mere supernatural improvement of ordinary human conditions is hoped for, but life in some sense infinite, of God and with God.

What, then, must be the resurrection from death which completes this scheme of things?

# CHAPTER X

# THE RESURRECTION

HUMAN beings find themselves as members of a race which has existed for an immense period of time, while individually they are beings of comparatively very brief duration, at least as regards memory and physical continuity. Each can trace back his consciousness a little distance, and then there is a blank, this limit of memory corresponding to immaturity in the physical organism to which the consciousness is attached. Some consciousness evidently existed for a while previous to the extreme limit of memory in the adult. But the physical organism itself a little earlier began to be, becoming separated from a pre-existent human being in whom it first took shape. For some years consciousness with continuous memory acts through the physical organism, accumulating knowledge and forming character. But each adult human being sees that his fellows in course of time lose their physical vigour and finally cease to control their bodies and pass out of communication with him, though violence and certain other agencies may cause this to happen previously to the normal course of weakening and decay ; and after this their bodies disintegrate, and the component particles become scattered and go to form new bodies.

But the human race is evidently going through a process in which the present lives constitute a stage. Scientific investigation into past history and the laws of human life and development has made it seem probable that this is a process which tends to the growth of more elaborate and in some sense higher forms of consciousness. In particular, the progressive elimination of certain elements which seriously mar this brief human life, and the progressive development and protection of certain elements which seem valuable have already in some measure taken place and apparently will continue. As against this, however, the perfecting of life in other respects might render it really more miserable, if there were found no hope for life beyond death.

Human beings naturally recoil from the idea that death is the absolute end for them of consciousness, in which they have had, at any rate, tastes of good. Furthermore, at certain moments in certain more highly developed souls there arises a sense of permanence as belonging to personality as such. And religion, with its trust in the good ordering of all things, brings assurance that there is life for the individual beyond death.

But deep and intense religious experience also indicates a certain escaping or rising above death of those who attach themselves to God. Death, then, seems to be a kind of limitation belonging to the lower form of human life, from which a higher life, attained through earnest religion, would be exempt. But we may wonder how to relate the two intuitions—namely, that death does not put an end to personality, and that through religion souls escape from the kind of life in which death is involved.

But there naturally arises desire, not only to survive death and to escape death, but also to develop life. Now it is seen that life is developing in the race. And since this sort of development is normally development of such life as the individual already possesses, he desires to participate in this development, so far as it seems to him to make for good. Consequently the mind is inclined to rebel against the suggestion that death cuts the individual off from the growing and improving life which appears in mankind. On the other hand, there comes desire for a kind of life free from certain limitations which seem to attach necessarily to human life of the kind which exists. Wherefore there are apt to alternate a wish to participate in the growing life of mankind and a wish for an ethereal life which could be attained only by a break with the present conditions of humanity.

Let us first try to grasp the general view contained in the gospels and main apostolic writings on the subject of immortality and the resurrection, which view we can afterwards correct and develop in accordance with our evolutionary eschatology. For it is probable that the spiritual movement which gave rise to Christianity carried with it true intuitions as to the nature and destiny of souls, though in a measure falsified through the crude theological ideas of the age.

There are indicated two orders of immortality in the New Testament. The first belongs apparently to all souls. Jesus in the parable of The Rich Man and Lazarus clearly declares His belief that all, both good and bad, have consciousness after death. The rebuke to the rich man who planned a scheme of increasing his wealth—"Thou fool, this night they require thy life of thee; and the things which thou hast prepared, whose shall they be?"—implies the same.

We should also notice this passage in the Fourth Gospel, which, if, as supposed, not authentic of Jesus, bears witness to a belief in the survival of all souls current among the early Christians: "Marvel not at this; for an hour cometh, in which all that are in the tombs shall hear His voice and shall come forth; they that have done good unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of judgment."

The second order of immortality is that which is granted only to the true children of God, to the faithful or redeemed. In the Synoptic Gospels it seems to be implied, though it is not expressly stated, that only the saved are to rise, at least in this saying: "When they shall rise from the dead, they neither marry, nor are given in marriage; but are as angels in Heaven." Accordingly the wicked, who, presumably, do not become as angels in Heaven, do not rise. In the parallel passage in St. Luke this is clearly understood. The life without marriage and without death is for those "that are accounted worthy to attain to that world [age], and the resurrection from the dead." And "the sons of God" are identical with "the sons of the resurrection." We should also notice the words, "Neither can they die any more." Does this indeed represent the mind of Jesus? Those in whom sin still reigns, He seems to say, have a consciousness beyond death, but they die again. And death and marriage go together, marriage replacing the lives which death takes away. But there is coming an age in which death, and consequently marriage and birth, for some at least, shall have ceased. At present mankind is wholly in the condition of mortality; but there will be for mankind a life of immortality, in which those who have become like God shall partake.

And then follows this argument: "But as touching the dead, that they are raised; have ye not read in the Book of Moses, in the passage about the Bush, how God spake unto him, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? He is not the God of the dead, but of the living [for all live unto Him—St. Luke]: ye do greatly err." Jesus drops, as it were, from the high level of present revelation to the common ground of appeal to Scripture. Apart from what I have been telling you, He seems to say, you should have known from the Sacred Book that God does not allow those who serve Him aright to perish. But is there not here indicated a form of immortality intermediate between that belonging to the wicked and that to which the true children of God will at last attain—one, namely, in which good men who have not attained to the resurrection partake, and such as may be fittingly spoken of as "life unto God"? And yet it is generally hazardous to decide as to the mind of Jesus from a single sentence.

The idea, however, that immortality is a condition to which the devoted children of God attain in a coming age is stated elsewhere: "There is no man that hath left home, or brethren, or sisters, or mother, or father, or children, or lands for my sake, and the Gospel's sake, but he shall receive a hundredfold now in this time, homes, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world [age] to come eternal life." The restriction of the resurrection to the righteous springs from the general conception of the salvation of man as life, in contrast to the death which is the consequence of sin (Mark ix. 43, 45; x. 17; Luke x. 25).

In the mystical language of the Fourth Gospel eternal life both is a possession in this mortal existence and is to be attained hereafter, as in this saying: "He that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day."[1] The believer in Jesus Christ—such appears to be the doctrine—has even between the barriers of birth and death the seed of life eternal; and death does not affect him as it does others; and this seed will grow into true deathlessness anon.

St. Paul's view of immortality closely resembles this. Already are the faithful risen with Christ (Colossians ii. 12; Ephesians ii. 6). But they shall be raised in another sense hereafter: "As in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive." The final conquest of death is yet to be gained: "The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." But he seems also to have held, perhaps only later, that a spiritual body is obtained immediately on death: "We know that if the earthly house of our tabernacle be dissolved, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

Thirdly, the ultimate salvation of all is involved in the nature of God as represented by Jesus, and even implied in some of His sayings, for instance, that the publicans and harlots will enter the Kingdom of God before the Scribes and Pharisees, and in the aphorism "Many first shall be last, and last first."

---

[1] The words "at the last day," in vi. 39, 40, 44, 54, have been thought by eminent critics to be an interpolation (*vide* p. 332).

To pass outside the Synoptic Gospels, this text in the Fourth Gospel implies universal salvation: "I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto Me." A feeling after the same is evident in the First Epistle to Timothy[1] in the following assertions: "God willeth that all men should be saved." "God is the Saviour of all men, specially of them that believe." A tendency in the same direction is discernible in these declarations of St. Paul's: "All Israel shall be saved." "God hath shut up all unto disobedience, that He might have mercy upon all."

A further important aspect of the general view in the New Testament of the resurrection is that it is a world-event. It will occur in conjunction with the coming of Christ and the inauguration of the new age or Kingdom of Heaven. On the other hand, there seem to be tendencies in St. Paul and St. John towards an individualistic conception of the resurrection. We should remark that the problem of the intermediate state was less pressing under the expectation of the return of Christ in the near future.

The kind of life to which souls pass in the resurrection is but outlined. To judge from the words attributed to Jesus, it is a life without sex and without death, in these respects at least such as the angels already enjoy. St. Paul describes briefly the nature of the resurrection body: it is incorruptible, glorious, powerful, spiritual. The word "spiritual" seems to include both "adapted to the spiritual life" and "ethereal."

We will now consider briefly what evidence there is, apart from the New Testament, of man's survival of death and immortality and the nature of his future life.

---

[1] That it was written by St. Paul has been gravely doubted by many eminent critics.

On the assumption that the general tendency of the growth of humanity is good and in accordance with the nature of the Universe, if we find belief in immortality to be intimately involved in the highest stage of the development of humanity yet attained, we have good ground for taking that belief as probably true. And there is a general voice of humanity in poetry and philosophy and religion, in its effort after the transcendental good, that the soul is essentially eternal and part of the Divine Eternal. As typical of this voice we may take the poem of Emily Brontë—

"No coward soul is mine,
No trembler in the world's storm-troubled sphere:
I see Heaven's glories shine,
And faith shines equal, arming me from fear.

O God within my breast,
Almighty, ever-present Deity!
Life—that in me has rest,
As I—undying Life—have power in Thee!

Vain are the thousand creeds
That move men's hearts: unutterably vain;
Worthless as withered weeds,
Or idlest froth amid the boundless main,

To waken doubt in one
Holding so fast by Thine infinity;
So surely anchored on
The steadfast rock of immortality.

With wide-embracing love
Thy spirit animates eternal years,
Pervades and broods above,
Changes, sustains, dissolves, creates, and rears.

Though earth and man were gone,
And suns and universes ceased to be,
And Thou wert left alone,
Every existence would exist in Thee.

There is not room for Death,
Nor atom that his might could render void:
Thou—THOU art Being and Breath,
And what THOU art may never be destroyed."

There appear to be two nearly related intuitions developing in the more exalted consciousness of the race: one, that through goodness and holy aspiration the soul wins beyond mortality into a life in some sense Divine and eternal; and the other, that all souls have an indestructible core which will develop into true immortality. This seems implied in these words of Tennyson:—

"Oh! yet we trust that somehow good
Will be the final goal of ill,
To pangs of nature, sins of will,
Defects of doubt, and taints of blood;

That nothing walks with aimless feet;
That not one life shall be destroyed,
Or cast as rubbish to the void,
When God hath made the pile complete;

That not a worm is cloven in vain;
That not a moth with vain desire
Is shrivell'd in a fruitless fire,
Or but subserves another's gain.

Behold, we know not anything;
I can but trust that good shall fall
At last—far off—at last, to all,
And every winter change to spring."

We may add that poetry which presupposes a Christian view of the World not infrequently asserts or suggests that souls existed previously to birth, as these lines of Wordsworth :—

> "Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting ;
> The soul that rises with us, our life's star,
> Hath had elsewhere its setting
> And cometh from afar."

Certainly during the nineteenth century, under the influence of the scientific study of Nature, the doctrine that the World is Divinely ordered for the production of high forms of life fell into disrepute with many of the more eminent intellects. Physical processes were regarded as primary, and life and consciousness as derivative. It was seriously attempted to explain the Universe in terms of physical law. But a reaction from this materialistic philosophy soon occurred ; and it became apparent that, whereas certain old theological conceptions were abolished by science, new and vital theological growth was springing up. The human mind started to rebuild its edifice of philosophy, beginning with the material, passing thence to the organic, and thence to the psychical, with special attention to the moral, and seeking by means of its new knowledge to reach to the Divine Source of all things. For a while, indeed, when the importance of soul-life began to be recognised, the personal was rated low ; wherefore the belief in personal immortality was regarded as rather symbolic of the truth than actually true. And certainly it was needful to sweep away from the scientific mind the old conceptions of personality as necessarily limited in particular ways. But psychology and philosophy have since become aware of the weakness of a theory of the mind and the World which ignores the personal. There has grown a profounder conception and higher appreciation of person and personality. Wherefore it has come to be scientific to hold that the object of the World-process is the development of rational or spiritual life in persons, and that persons are as such the potential foci of that life. And so belief in personal immortality seems to be inherent in humanity when it has passed a certain stage of evolution. Either, we may say, souls are immortal, or else the higher consciousness of mankind is fundamentally deluded—its aspirations vain, its philosophy chimerical.

But let us try to get more definite proof as to the reality and nature of the immortality of the soul. To begin with, it is worth while paying heed to the immense volume of evidence that has been collected for the survival of souls after death. This in itself does not prove immortality, but, in showing that the death of the body does not always entail the immediate cessation of the conscious activity of the soul, clears the way for that belief. But we should notice that there are records of the survival of personalities who have not borne very exalted characters ; whence we may infer that it is not only those who have been spiritually quickened (in the Christian sense) who survive death. This gives encouragement to the idea that all souls (or perhaps we should rather say " selves ") are immortal in the sense that they are never entirely annihilated. Psychical research, be it added, also indicates the condition of souls after death, and in general proves itself a valuable assistant to theology.[1]

---

[1] We may refer to "Human Personality," by Myers, and "The Survival of Man," by Sir Oliver Lodge.

But introspection reveals that the self is out of time and indestructible. (It is better to use the word "self" than "soul" in this connection; soul is rather the concrete self, the self with its qualities which may change.) The destruction of the self could only signify that it was deprived of consciousness. It is impossible that the very meaning of the consciousness of any particular ego could be annihilated. If there were no experience for an ego, at least there would be lack of experience for that ego. A person could not come to an end in such a sense that regret that he were not now in existence would be unintelligible. In other words, selves belong to the eternal world of meanings or ideal possibilities.

The self is what constitutes the identity of the various states of consciousness. Now there are other kinds of identity. There is the identity of continuity, on account of which various events are said to be parts of the same process—for instance, a speech, and various pieces of matter are said to be parts of the same thing—for instance, a mountain. But the identity of the ego is not such, as is shown by breaks in consciousness. Nor, let us add, does it depend on continuity of memory, since I have forgotten many past experiences, while it remains true that they were experienced by me. Another kind of identity is that of quality, on account of which we say that various objects have, for example, the same shape or colour. But this is not the identity of the ego, since there cannot be several instances of me. More nearly analogous is the identity of spaces. An empty space may be said to be nothing. In like sense an unconscious ego may be said to be nothing. A space may be occupied by various objects or, conceivably, become unoccupied. But it is indestructible. It remains as the eternal possibility of occupation. In like manner an ego is indestructible. It remains as the eternal possibility of consciousness.

Annihilation of a self is strictly inconceivable. Let us try to suppose a self annihilated. This does not exclude the conceivability of its being re-created. If the identity of the self consisted in continuity, it would be inconceivable, as an interval in time having once occurred cannot be abolished. If it consisted in quality, there might be several instances of the self created, which is inconceivable. The re-creation is conceivable, because the continued existence of the ideal possibility of consciousness is presupposed—that is, the ego. The annihilation thought of is extinction of consciousness or of the normal capacity of consciousness, not of the subject of consciousness.

Were the self to suffer real annihilation, there would be nothing to occasion the sense of all not being well when a soul had died, since the ideas of good and evil have validity only in reference to what is—to real, not to wholly imaginary persons. One does not pity the indefinite number of persons whom one might imagine existing for not existing. The very fear of extinction presupposes that in a sense the self is conceived as continuing, at least as meaning and ideal possibility of reality. What is in truth disliked is the suggestion of the me and thee who now feel and will and think never feeling and willing and thinking any more.

Selves, then, being indestructible, what evidence does experience give that they will gain true immortality—that is, deathless life? In mystical ecstasy, which seems to be the beginning of spiritual life, the soul appears to undergo an extraordinary expansion of consciousness, for the moment escaping to some extent the restrictions of the body. This points to such mastery of and superiority to the physical as would involve the abolition of the break in life occasioned by the disintegration of the body. Perhaps too miraculous healings and other supernormal influences of the soul over the body are early instances of the transformation of the material by the spiritual which is to result in the abolition of death.

The notion of the immortality of the soul that we have gathered so far is, briefly, this : The abstract self or subject is imperishable. The soul survives death in greater or less degree. Through spiritual life souls attain to some kind of superiority to death, which we may expect to increase in course of time.

In order to discover more about the progress of the soul towards immortality, we should gain some notion of the significance of life in physical bodies and of the death of the body. Now why should the soul become joined to a physical body at all? Why should not it have existed always in some such incorporeal manner as we imagine it to do after death? The answer seems to be that contact with matter gives it material and basis for life. We may suppose, then, that the requisite contact with matter is best obtained at a certain stage of its growth through such an organism as the human body. The earlier operations of the soul are related closely to its material circumstances and occur in response to sense stimuli. Man's thought is exercised and developed first in the attempt to know the material bodies about him. His will is directed towards producing changes in these material bodies. His feelings are stimulated by the condition of the same. But even when cognition and volition and emotion are related mainly to the personal, a material basis of mental activity remains indispensable. The psychologist investigates the dealings of mind with matter. The orator seeks to influence wills dealing with material objects. And the love of one soul for another expresses itself in physical actions and abstentions, and is roused by and delights in qualities of soul that are produced and exercised by objects and events in the physical environment. As souls evolve, the more do they find interest and value in souls with their qualities and operations, so that their activity becomes more remote from the material stimuli and objects. But it seems that souls must always need stable and resistant things as ground of departure, so to speak, for their life. Now the human body is the means by which the soul affects and is affected by the material world at a certain stage of its growth.

Such being the reason of physical life, what is the reason of physical death? Why must the soul, after a period sufficient only for a small amount of mental and spiritual growth, lose the instrument of the material experience requisite for that growth? Now the reason for death in the evolution of the human race is clear. The continuous replacement of individuals by death and birth ensures that plasticity and freedom from the evil consequences of the past which are conditions of progress. Each generation may to some degree profit by both the good and the evil work and conduct of its predecessors, adopting and imitating the good and taking warning by the evil. We may, indeed, wonder why a continuous plasticity such as belongs to children would not have been preferable. The answer to this seems to be, that the intense effort and concentration of energy that makes for progress involves a certain fixation of character, which itself hinders further progress. An instance is the puritanical rigidity which arises from the contest with voluptuousness. And so at a stage of psychic development when considerable limitation of the field of activity is requisite there must be some agency which will from time to time deliver men from their limitations. It is perhaps worth adding that the constant renewal of the race by death and birth delivers it also from the perpetuation of injuries due to accident. Much, indeed, of the products of labour is lost in the process of renewal. But it is not concrete results but rather principle and power which are of value, and these improve from age to age. In like manner the grown man may have forgotten most of the knowledge acquired during his early education, while he retains the intellectual capacity which that acquisition of knowledge developed.

It is evident that death has this function also in the individual: it delivers from the fixation which has come from dealing with experience and the injuries which misfortune has caused. Death in the individual, as in the race, is a means to the restoration of that plasticity which is a condition of growth. It enables the developing life to profit by the past without being altogether bound to its consequences. It allows general capacities and principles of character to survive, while it frees them from the particular content and detailed working-out with which they have become involved.

But whatever may be the ultimate destiny of the soul, it cannot be that every one at death has arrived at such a stage of development that he will never more require such experience as life in a physical body affords. Let us consider too how narrow and partial have been many physical lifetimes, some, indeed, not passing beyond the stage of infancy. Surely, if physical life has any function in the development of the soul, one such lifetime cannot be enough. And if it has that function which it apparently has, namely, the manifold development of intellect and character and emotion through a special kind of contact with material existence, till the soul is ripe for spiritual life, then for most of those who lived in the early ages of humanity many more such lifetimes must have been necessary. Physical life provides certain conditions for the growth of souls. But from experience we know that the growth of souls in the respects for which physical life is adapted occupies a period vastly exceeding any one period of physical existence between birth and death. The conclusion is irresistible. Souls pass through many periods of physical existence such as we know. This is no doubtful inference, but to one comprehending the manner of psychic growth as revealed in human experience is far more certain than the inference that the known laws of physical nature are valid in unexplored parts of the World. For the inference to successive incarnations of human souls springs out of the knowledge of the processes which constitute our own life. We see why souls must grow in this way.

But the experiences of previous lives are not ordinarily remembered. It is not hard, however, to discern that this oblivion is a condition of the greatest progress. The inclination to review memories of previous lives might easily distract the mind from proper attention to the concerns of the present. And the consciousness of the past would tend to check the development of the soul taking fresh directions. Even in one lifetime it is sometimes desirable to forget the past, so as to deal whole-heartedly and hopefully with fresh circumstances. There is also this consideration, that the capacity of the human brain must be limited.

The relation of the condition of the soul in one lifetime to its previous lifetimes is analogous to the relation of its condition in maturity to its childhood. The grown man finds himself in possession of abilities which were acquired through almost forgotten experiences of his early years. Likewise the soul, being free from the encumbrance of particular memories and special applications of faculties, retains something of the development gained in past lifetimes, and in dealing freshly with circumstances carries its development a little farther. Oblivion, then, is a condition of that newness and variety of growth whereby the soul becomes most rapidly fitted for its Divine destiny. And we need not be troubled as to whether continuity subsists through oblivion. The man is identical with the infant that has grown into him, in spite of his being unable to recall the infantine experiences. It is, though, a probable idea that some memory of past existences is latent, to be revived some time when it is profitable to the growth of the soul.

We have next to consider whether and how far the soul's bodily existences take place on the same globe. On the whole, we may affirm that they do. The ordinary lifetime in the earlier stages of the development of humanity admits the soul to but a minute fraction of the kinds of influences in this world that would aid its growth. Let us think how limited have been most of the millions of millions of human careers that have taken place on this planet, and then of the comparatively vast possibilities for life among mankind. Surely the soul is put through various and progressively wider careers in human form on the Earth, whatever its ultimate origin or destiny. In particular, the soul must from time to time alternate between man and woman, in order to develop in due proportion certain complementary qualities, which, indeed, the more highly developed souls manifest in combination, as said Frederick Robertson: "In Christ were Strength and Grace—Wisdom and Love—Courage and Purity—Divine Manliness: Divine Womanliness. In all noble characters you find the two blended: in Him—the noblest—blended into one entire and perfect Humanity."

Moreover, the influences in physical life on this globe productive of the growth of souls come into being gradually as souls are born capable of profiting by them. The human race in developing is ever providing the new conditions for which during previous generations it has rendered souls ready. As it were, the school to which the pupil returns in order to progress itself progresses, and thus is able to provide for his continually increasing needs. Wherefore, even if any soul had derived almost all the good which human existence on the Earth could provide him at one time, it might later return to receive wider and deeper experience, the capacity for providing which the human race had since gained.

Another line of argument brings us to the same conclusion. We found that knowledge of the history of mankind and of the growth of life necessitated an evolutionary eschatology. The end of the world must be the result of a process of the development of spiritual life in humanity, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, extending through many generations. Now according to the Judaistic eschatology, the end of the world was to come within a few years, and the righteous were to rise to take part in the ensuing heavenly state. But because the heavenly state is being reached by mankind in the course of thousands of generations since man first came into being on this globe, and because the condition for participating in it must be a far higher and ampler righteousness than for many ages was attained, and because it is unthinkable that souls merely because they shared a primitive morality should be excluded from the heavenly state, therefore there must be a development of individuals proceeding *pari passu* with the development of the race and of like nature. It is reasonable, then, to regard the development of the race as also the development of individuals from age to age so as to become fit for the heavenly state which is the goal of both race and individuals.

A conceivable way of avoiding for the moment this conclusion would be the supposition that the heavenly state to which the race progresses is not the same as the heavenly state to which the individuals progress who die before that state is reached by the race. But this supposition is exposed to two objections: First, since most souls evidently require more physical existence like to that out of which they pass, they must become incarnate again, if not in this human race, yet in one or more similar human races elsewhere; secondly, souls would be separated from the society for whose salvation and advancement they had longed and laboured and sacrificed themselves. Reincarnation is anyhow a necessity, and one naturally prefers a theory of it consistent with the continued close relationship of the individual to the great progressive organizations of rational humanity.

One believing in evolution and personal immortality can reject the idea of reincarnation, and, indeed, reincarnation in this human race on this globe, only through lack of clearness of thought. If there be evolution and personal immortality, there is also reincarnation, and almost certainly reincarnation in the same race. Now evolution is patent. And for belief in personal immortality there is sufficient ground.

But it is not only through this corporeal existence that souls develop. Between the corporeal lifetimes there are periods of what we may call by contrast incorporeal existence. In that what corresponds to the material environment and objects appears to be more plastic. There is, generally, less stress and strain than in corporeal existence. We may judge that the life between death and birth is, compared with that between birth and death, a time of rest and assimilation of the lessons of experience. Such does psychical research indicate.[1]

The incorporeal existence must be kept in mind in evolutionary eschatology. For it is not humanity as physically incarnate merely that develops into the Kingdom of God, but humanity alternating between physical incarnation and incorporeal existence. Both the corporeal and the incorporeal must be traced in the evolution. We must look for contribution from both in the heavenly life which is the destiny of souls.

---

[1] *Vide* "Both Sides of the Veil," by A. M. Robbins.

So much, then, for the survival and growth of souls. We come now to the subject of the resurrection—that is, according to eschatological terminology, the transition from mortality to immortality. According to Jewish apocalyptic, souls would rise in bodies from Sheol to participate in the Messianic kingdom. Likewise, according to Christian theology, souls would come out of Paradise to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven when it commenced. According to our evolutionary eschatology, we believe that souls will cease to die and have eternal life in the Kingdom of God. We have to inquire how this will come to pass.

But first a few words as to the expectation of a deathless existence. While the soul is engaged in narrowly limited efforts and developments in relative separation from God, so long does it require to be relieved periodically by an automatic process from its perversions and specialisations. But when the soul has grown a strong spiritual nature and lives in constant union with God, it will not require such interruptions of its life. Being in conscious possession of the primary good, it may from that as its basis engage in manifold activities, without danger of perversion or fixation. If, indeed, there needs to be renewal of the organ of its lower life, the soul will, we may suppose, itself accomplish the renewal as it is aware of the need. And the ample Divine life will not admit of any such tedium as might arise from a long-continued limited life.

But in what state of being is eternal life to be realised? Will it be on the Earth, or on some other globe, or in the sky, or somewhere in the interstellar spaces? Will it consist with bodies compounded of ordinary matter, or with bodies of some finer substance, or with none? The general presentation of the Kingdom of God in the teaching of Jesus suggests a glorified earthly existence. And, presumably, this includes immortality, since the children of the resurrection are said not to die any more.

Without being able yet to see the ultimate destiny of souls, we have certain clues that will guide us some distance in our investigation into their future. For we know of evolution and the social character of humanity and the use of the physical.

Let us carefully consider this question: Is the Kingdom of God a state into which souls individually pass out of mankind, or is it the goal of the evolution of mankind? Is the Kingdom of God in existence behind the veil for perfected souls to enter after death, or is it a state of the human race, whether corporeal or incorporeal, on Earth or in Heaven, into which it will become transformed?

According to the former theory, the Kingdom of God would be a state of life into which would pass from time to time the souls which had after many human existences become capable of living in it. The condition of entering the Kingdom of God would be a certain development of soul, especially spiritual development, which might, conceivably, be reached at any time beyond a certain stage of the evolution of the human race. But in this view, what purpose would the further evolution of the race serve? One would state the answer as follows: The various stages through which the human race passes provide various conditions for that growth of souls which enables them to enter the Kingdom of God. For instance, let us suppose, the persecutions of early Christianity, through evoking in the martyrs religious heroism, conditioned the requisite development of a few souls for entrance into the Kingdom of God after death. Subsequently other situations have evoked and will evoke in some immense Christian self-sacrifice, so that they return to human existence no more, but enter the Kingdom of God after death. (Of course, it is open to any one to suppose that the requisite perfection has not yet been attained, but will be—the principle of salvation being the same.) Now in the course of the evolution of mankind there will occur changes which will promote the requisite development in large numbers of souls, and perhaps finally in all. The evolution of society, for instance, through encouraging and demanding mutual service and love with self-sacrifice among all the members of a community, will, it may be supposed, powerfully promote the spiritual growth which will enable souls at death to leave human existence behind for ever and enter the Kingdom of God. The later course of the evolution of mankind will then have practically this sole purpose: the presentation of various situations which promote that development of soul which conditions entrance into the Kingdom of God after death. Eventually, we may imagine on this theory, the human race will disappear through all souls finally passing out of it, unless, indeed, there be fresh souls to become incarnate in it.

This view of the progress of man to eternal life resembles the view in Buddhism, according to which each soul, as it attains complete conquest of desire, enters at death into the Divine, and returns no more into the cycle of human existence. But in Buddhism there is little sense of the great progress of mankind, which science has manifested. Must it not be that the developing corporeal life is destined to make some important contribution to the ideal? And then the Buddhist conception of salvation is vitiated from the Christian standpoint by its inherent contempt for active goodness, the conquest of desire being exalted above labouring love.

On the other hand, this view of the progress of man to eternal life might be amplified in such a manner as to admit of importance to the various forms of human goodness as it develops in corporeal existence. It is not only the spiritual principle, let it be argued, that is of value in the Kingdom of God, but the spiritual principle with its different expressions or contents, which are severally determined by the different functions which souls in corporeal existence are called upon to fulfil. The Kingdom of God is such as to require for its completion individuals with different characters, though of the same spiritual principle, which are formed through this principle being applied to the different situations which the race in its evolution presents. According to this, the human race, with all the variety which its evolution produces, is the condition for the development of the various forms of the identical principle of love which will together constitute a heavenly society in a state without physical bodies, but will not become collectively transformed into the heavenly society, since individuals pass into it one by one, as they become fit.

We will now consider the second theory, namely, that humanity will collectively become the Kingdom of God. By this is not necessarily to be understood that the whole race together will become the Kingdom of God, but that social relations will pass without breach of continuity into the Kingdom of God, instead of, as on the other theory, being broken up by death, to be formed again afterwards.

We may suppose that as the spiritual nature grows, it acquires more and more control over the body (as is indicated by the miracles of the New Testament), modifying and developing it so as to make it the instrument of a higher life. Death will become less automatic and more voluntary. And the life of physical incarnation and the intermediate incorporeal life will come more and more into communication. Perhaps, indeed, they will at last merge into one another, the soul interacting with the physical world through the physical body, and at the same time living in the incorporeal world and so having immediate communion with other souls and with God Himself. And thus there will develop through the collective evolution of humanity a type of body which will be suitable for souls in eternal life. Humanity will grow physically and mentally and socially and spiritually, altogether, and so under the Holy Spirit transform itself by a continuous process into the Kingdom of God.

This second theory of the growth of the Kingdom of God is preferable for the following reason: it provides better for interaction with the material world. We have seen that the function of the physical body is to be an instrument of interaction with matter, which provides the resistants requisite for life. Some resistants there must be also in eternal life. Certainly discarnate souls have resistants not composed of the gross matter of this world. But since these resistants are weaker, it may be supposed that the life they could evoke would be less vigorous. On the whole, so far as we can judge, the two forms of existence, the corporeal and the incorporeal, will develop together and coalesce, each contributing an important element to the final result. It seems probable that, instead of the physical body being simply discarded as eternal life is gained, it will be gradually transformed to higher uses.

On the other hand, we would expect souls to become in time independent of this particular globe, since the material forces which render it suitable for life must at last give out ; wherefore a different organ of communication with matter will be required, even though it be developed out of the old one.

In another respect this theory should be slightly modified. It is supposed that eminent personalities may for longer than the usual period continue discarnate for the purpose of inspiring and guiding incarnate humanity. But we may expect them to become incarnate when mankind has advanced to some further stage of evolution.

Let us, then, assume this theory and proceed to consider how the physical body of eternal life will come into being. It is probable that the present method of generation will come to an end. It is adapted to a stage in evolution when relatively elaborate bodies have to be produced for yet embryonic souls. The process naturally fulfils itself without the intelligent co-operation of souls, so that a sufficient number of suitable bodies are continually being provided for them. The division into sexes makes reproduction to some extent collective, and so through the mixture of blood probably stimulates the evolution of higher forms. It has also in a measure enabled more vital force to be expended on the formation of the body, and has set the male sex free for other activity. Now when the purpose of the individual soul is allowed to determine the renewal of its body, there will be no longer necessity for an automatic provision of bodies. And as the soul grows in Divine life, communion of souls will secure abundant collective influence on evolution. And in the state of immortality, owing to the power of spirit, the renewal of the body will interfere little with the life of the soul. All this encourages the expectation that in the Kingdom of God souls will each have control over its own body. And so sexual reproduction will be no more. And this was declared by Jesus Himself according to the record: "When they shall rise from the dead, they neither marry, nor are given in marriage; but are as angels in Heaven." Perhaps it is worth quoting certain sayings attributed to Jesus by extra-canonical writers: "The Lord Himself, being asked by some one when His kingdom should come, said: When the two shall be one, and the outside as the inside, and the male with the female neither male nor female."[1] "They say that the Saviour Himself said, I have come to destroy the works of the female. . . . Salome says, How long shall men die? . . . The Lord answers, So long as women bear children."[1] "On Salome inquiring, when the things she asked about would be known, the Lord said, When ye shall trample on the garment of shame, and when the two shall become one, and the male with the female neither male nor female."[2]

---

[1] Clemens Romanus, Epistle ii., chap. xii. (spurious).

When there is no death, there will be no birth; and when there is no birth, there will be no sex. Physical existence without death or birth or sex will, we may expect, be developed by mankind as it grows in eternal life.

But we are drawn farther along the path of speculation. How will the body of eternal life develop? According to our view of evolution it will develop by a continuous process out of the existing physical nature of man. It will, so Nature's manner of working seems to portend, come into being by the gradual transmutation of body that already exists.

We are now exploring over hitherto little trodden country. But there are marks to guide us. Let us follow them as best we may. Will the body of the resurrection develop out of the present male body, or out of the present female body, or out of both?

Against the last hypothesis may be adduced the general biological opinion, that every animal species has only one line of ancestry. As if for the sake of economy, Nature concentrates her energies on one species, in order to produce a certain result. It might be replied that the case under consideration cannot be so decided, since we have a new factor, namely, the spiritual life, which has great power of transforming both body and mind to its services. But then we are not considering the power of spirit in its fulness, but rather the early growth of spirit preparing a body for itself. And so, here as elsewhere, we may expect organism to change economically along the line of least resistance.

---

[1] Clemens Alexandrinus, "Stromateis," iii., § 9.

[2] *Ibid.*, § 13, quoted from Cassianus.

Which body, then, the male or the female, seems the more favourable subject for development in accordance with the needs of the growing spiritual life? Let us consider briefly the significance of sexual distinction. Low forms of organism generate by fission. Then higher in the scale of organism a species is divided into two classes with different forms, corresponding to difference in function in the promotion of the life of the species. To the members of the one class falls the function of producing and nourishing the young; to the members of the other class fall, in the main, the other functions which subserve life, namely, provision of food and defence. This second class became in consequence the more powerful physically.

In mankind the males have been for the most part dominant. They have been superior in physical and mental capacity. Up to a certain stage in evolution the ideals of humanity have been much more realised in men; while women have been, in contrast, specialists in their peculiar function of reproduction of the species. Men have been more typical of humanity, exhibiting its power and grandeur and beauty; while women have been servants of humanity in the vital work of motherhood, their nature being determined to that end. The great geniuses of the race—the philosophers and prophets and poets, who have combined male and female qualities in a high degree—have been for the most part men.

On the other hand, the material of the nature of women is normally higher, if more limited, than the material of the nature of men. Their peculiar function has rendered them more responsive to the living beings with whom they come in contact. They have therefore, on the whole, more tendency to sympathy and trust and love. Their character, then, is naturally more Christian, though in a smaller sphere, than the character of men.

Yet, owing to their position of subjection, they have been marred and distorted more than men by the conventions and proprieties of society and the restrictions placed on their development. They have been narrow, unreasonable, finicking, artificial, idolatrous of caricatures of righteousness and beauty.

We must, however, look not so much to what women have been, but rather to what, under favourable influences, they would naturally tend to become. In spite, then, of the artificiality of women in the past, and in spite of the fact that the greatest personalities, with their union of manliness and womanliness, have been up to a certain stage in evolution mostly in male form, it seems probable that, owing to the normally more Christian tendency of womanhood, the physical body of eternal life will develop out of the present female body. Womanhood has been more perverted than manhood and of smaller capacity. But from its intrinsic and natural goodness it is more likely, so far as we may judge, to be developed by the Spirit of God into the Divine and eternal humanity. And this development will be assisted by women applying themselves to wider spheres of work for mankind. They will, through labour, acquire continually more physical and mental strength, and also wider and intenser and purer love. They will grow in all the essential human qualities, far exceeding the former manliness and womanliness. Their whole being, physical and mental and spiritual, will evolve more and more, in preparation for the life that is beyond birth and sex and death—the Kingdom of God.

Such, then, does the resurrection of humanity to eternal life appear to be. We have had in this inquiry to take account of several facts: the physical, the mental, the spiritual; birth, the period of bodily life, death; the indestructibleness of the ego; the hope of immortality that springs from the spiritual; the constant renewal of humanity through birth and death; the collective evolution of humanity; corporeal existence and incorporeal existence; the qualities of human nature to which the established manner of generation has given rise. Each of these has its bearing on the problem of the resurrection. They are closely interrelated in the great progress of mankind to immortality.

The outcome of our meditations is as follows: Mortality attaches to souls till they have attained to a certain growth of spiritual life. They pass through many births and deaths before they become capable of immortality. Immortality is the fruit of spiritual life, but the conditions of it are prepared by the collective evolution of humanity. The physical body is not abandoned, but transformed so as to become suitable to eternal life. The present existence in the flesh and the present existence out of the flesh coalesce as immortality is gained. With the attainment of immortality sexual generation comes to an end. From the body of the sex which is more concerned with the life of others is developed the body of eternal life.

## CHAPTER XI

# THE JUDGMENT

LET us trace very briefly the growth of the idea of Divine judgment in Judaism and Christianity.

The expectation that God will some time signally punish the wicked and reward the righteous was engendered by the spectacle of the prosperity of the former and the adversity of the latter. The state of the world appeared to call urgently for the intervention of the Almighty to render justice. And the Hebrew prophets, beholding the rampant iniquity of the nation, predicted a Day of the Lord, in which He would destroy the sinners and form a new Israel of the righteous remnant.

At first this judgment day was regarded as one among others in which the Lord from time to time meted out justice to the children of men. Gradually, however, it came to be thought of as unique and far transcending any previous Divine intervention. By the apocalyptists it was magnified into a mighty catastrophe which would close the present order of existence : the wicked would be destroyed in a place of fire called Gehenna, and the servants of the Lord would enter into a blessed and immortal life. Since the reward of the righteous was to be eternal, it was natural to think of the punishment of the wicked as eternal also.

Ordinary judgments of the Lord were known by experience to be frequently sudden and to destroy entirely the bodily existence. Accordingly, the supreme world-judgment would be none the less sudden and destroy both body and soul.

The expectation of a sudden world-wide judgment near at hand, through which the righteous would live an eternal life, and the wicked die an eternal death, passed over into Christianity. Christ would return in glory with angels before the living generation had gone, would bring the present world-order to an end, and would consign the true believers to Heaven and the wicked and unbelieving to Hell.

But there are additions to and variations of this in the New Testament. There are lesser judgments on individuals before the end—for instance, on Ananias and Sapphira, on Herod, on Simon Magus. More noteworthy is the judgment depicted in the parable of Dives and Lazarus, according to which the righteous enter into bliss and the wicked into torment immediately after death. The intimation put in the mouth of the disciples that Judas had gone to his own place seems to imply the same.

According to the Gospel of John, Jesus disclaims the office of Judge of mankind: "If any man hear My sayings, and keep them not, I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world. He that rejecteth Me, and receiveth not My sayings, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I spake, the same shall judge him." Or, rather, the judgment that Jesus performs is that which arises out of His work of revelation and takes place quietly, as this saying implies: "For judgment came I into this world, that they which see not may see; and that they which see may become blind."

In the Apocalypse of the New Testament the Judgment is greatly extended. There are to be two resurrections, separated from each other by a considerable interval, during which the hosts of Heaven make war against the Devil and his followers.

But there is one very important complement in the New Testament to the Divine judgment—namely, the Divine forgiveness. Jesus represented God as the loving Father of men, ready to forgive the offences of His children, and eager to redeem from sin and misery each single one that goes astray. God is not content simply to exalt the good and destroy the bad, but wishes to save and exalt both good and bad.

It is interesting to note—leaving aside the actual mind of Jesus—in what way in early Christianity the doctrine of the mercy of God was allowed to affect the doctrine of the judgment of God. The doctrine of judgment, being the more primitive, was left practically undisturbed: God would one day judge mankind according to their deeds and dispense eternal reward and punishment. The doctrine of mercy had, accordingly, to fit itself into the room not definitely assigned to the doctrine of judgment. God was conceived as just according to the original apocalyptic scheme, and as merciful so far as was compatible with the integrity of that scheme. God would be merciful till the Day of Judgment, and severely just then and afterwards. This is highly illogical, but the result reflects the order of the formations. Such was the natural conservatism of the religious mind, that the new could only by degrees radically transform the old.

But the doctrine of the mercy of God underwent a different sort of transformation in early Christianity. In the mouth of Jesus the mercifulness of the Father in Heaven meant that God will bestow His higher blessings on any one who sincerely desires to do the Divine will, however great his offences may have been. God is ready at any time to overlook past evil conduct, and will judge rather according to the disposition. Consequently many who were guilty of flagrant immorality, being more apt to listen to the Gospel, would enter the Kingdom of God sooner than the majority of those who carefully observed a code of moral and religious law.

But St. Paul regarded forgiveness, not so much as a supplement to the due reward of deeds, but rather as a substitute for it. For the sense of human sinfulness in relation to the new birth made it seem impossible that any human being, save Jesus Christ, could deserve the Divine life. The condition of salvation became for St. Paul, not goodness, but faith. And forgiveness became for him, not merely disregard of past offences, but the beginning of life in the Spirit of God.

But the so-called mercy of God was by later theologians given an even wider application. To it was attributed the whole process of salvation, since man was regarded as too corrupt even to repent and believe unless made to do so by God. A figment of universal guilt owing to sin in Adam was supplied to make the doctrine consistent. All deserved to be sent to Hell ; some were, by Divine mercy, saved for Heaven. The ground of the selection lay in the inscrutable counsels of the Almighty. Thus was the teaching of Jesus on the love of God transformed by professing believers in Him into a doctrine of the capricious and heartless despotism of God.

The doctrine of the Divine judgment must be the outcome of the ideas of the love of God, of the significance of punishment, of the evolution of the human race, of the nature and life of souls. The love of God must be represented as primary and continual, and His severity as derivative therefrom and occasional. And the judgment must be seen as an element in the evolution of man, which goes on from age to age.

In the first place, let us consider judgment in the abstract. Judgment is assignment of reward and punishment, but the word in its theological use signifies, rather, punishment. Now punishment is distasteful experience inflicted with the intention of opposing a tendency of mind considered to be bad. Its efficacy depends on association of ideas, the pain inflicted engendering a habitual aversion from the act which is punished. But in a morally sensitive being punishment is apt to create a habitual aversion of a moral kind. The act becomes repugnant as a contravention of the law of right and wrong and as debasing to the soul. The use of punishment is to check and destroy bad habits of soul, and so to promote the growth of good habits of soul. Reward, also by association of ideas, encourages tendencies considered to be good. But in human government there is less need for reward, since good action naturally brings about pleasing results. In the Divine government of human life the natural results of conduct are to some extent its appropriate rewards and punishments. The more highly developed the soul, the more is virtue its own reward.

But there seems to be a kind of Divine opposition to bad developments of soul which takes the form, not so much of pain, as of destruction. Ordinary experience testifies that wrongdoing often entails premature death without extraordinary suffering in bodily existence. It seems that separation from the body to some extent delivers the soul from immoral tendencies which are assisted by perversions in the brain and nervous system. Similarly there may be some process after death whereby bad growths in the soul are destroyed.

Such, at least, is indicated by the words attributed to Jesus. The wicked, He says, will be "cast forth into the outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." They will be thrown into "the Gehenna of fire." He warns men to get rid of any offending member, that they be not cast "into Gehenna, into the unquenchable fire," "into Gehenna, where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched."

It were stupid to interpret this imaginative language as scientifically worded propositions. If Jesus had meant to assert that the destruction of the soul in Hell was such as to preclude any renewal of consciousness for its ego for ever, He would have used more definite expressions. Rather does He leave the manner and duration and result of the destruction indeterminate. He is speaking to His hearers in an order of ideas which they could easily appreciate, declaring that certain modes of living would result in exclusion from the coming heavenly bliss and bring upon them painful destruction. The ultimate destiny of the subjects of consciousness is not within His range at these moments of discourse. But He implies a destruction of faculties for living which were hopelessly corrupted and perverted, a process that could fittingly be symbolised by the consumption by fire and worms of the corpses in the valley of Gehenna.

Let us now try to realise in mutual contrast the main ways in which sin is abolished in the soul. In forgiveness or justification the soul is purged or begins to be purged of sin through Divine inspiration acting on it within. In punishment the sin is weakened or destroyed through the infliction of hateful experiences from without. The former is an operation of God with spiritual force. The latter is rather an operation of the lower forces of Nature acting in accordance with the Divine will.

In forgiveness the soul comes into contact with the Divine in virtue of its germinal will for good and self-surrender to God. The Holy Spirit, so gaining a hold of the soul, gradually overcomes and destroys the sin, at the same time calling forth and developing the spiritual life. The soul has not first to render itself throughout fit for spiritual life in union with God, but gains this in embryo through its aspiration towards the good and God. Having through repentance and faith come into intercourse with the Holy Spirit, the soul may, through constant self-surrender to God, whereby it obtains inspiration, and through constant effort to do the Divine will, become purified of sin and grow in spiritual life with a character suitable for the Kingdom of Heaven.

In punishment, on the other hand, the sin is weakened or destroyed because it brings the soul into distasteful conflict with forces that act on the other parts of it than the religious. For instance, sensuality may produce horrible sickness, which, through association of ideas, causes the sensuality to become abhorrent. This eradication of vice tends to free the soul for good moral development, and this in turn conditions the soul for spiritual life. But punishment is not an absolute alternative to forgiveness. Rather, by delivering the soul from part of its sin, and forcing it to consider its sinfulness and the issues of its life, punishment helps towards penitence, and penitence brings forgiveness.

Eradication of sin through forgiveness is preferable to eradication through punishment ; for the latter involves far greater loss of growth than the former, not only, perhaps, in the sinner, but also in those dear to him—loss that may take more than a lifetime fully to repair. The shrinking from punishment and the pleading for forgiveness are, then, justifiable, since cure of the sin through punishment will perhaps involve much spoiling of life and laboriously acquired good.

But, as observed, there seems to be yet another process of eradication of sin, which, though partly of the nature of punishment, is, more truly, death or destruction. We shall perhaps best get to understand it by considering that kind of sin for which, according to the teaching of Jesus, it is specially required. This is sin which is associated with authority in religion.

It is, briefly, the acceptance of an inferior morality and religion as if they were perfect, or nearly so, in particular, such morality and religion as exalt compliance with certain rules and formalities over genuine moral and religious activity. One may learn its nature from the parable of The Pharisee and the Publican, from the indictment against the Pharisees that they "tithe mint and rue and every herb, but pass over judgment and the love of God," from the frequent denunciations of the Scribes and Pharisees as hypocrites, and from the contrast drawn between the single eye which gives light to the body and the evil eye which makes the body dark. In its more developed form it appears to be the unpardonable sin of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, the mention of this being apparently prompted by the attribution of good works to evil agency.

This sin is, at least in its extreme form, curable only through considerable destruction of the soul, because it is a corruption of the moral sense at its root. Some purity of moral vision may co-exist with immorality. But when the noblest part of the soul is so distorted as to be incapable of recognising the good, there cannot be that faith or aspiration towards good in virtue of which the Holy Spirit may enter and regenerate the whole personality. In other sinners the deeper religious nature may for a while lie dormant, and, when awakened, be capable of receiving Divine grace ; but in those who, being of inferior morality, trust in themselves that they are righteous and despise others the religious nature has been developed, but developed awry. Wherefore no real penitence or faith is henceforth possible, until the personality as developed has been destroyed. A subsidiary reason for the deadliness of this sin is its comparative immunity from punishment in its earlier stages. The hypocrite may lead a law-abiding life, and so escape such punishment as man and Nature inflict on more flagrant sinners ; and when unhappiness in consequence of his hypocrisy does occur to him, he is exceedingly loath to acknowledge it as due to his fault. Perhaps the best chance of his salvation is that, before his natural goodness has been poisoned by his perverted moral sense, another's distress should evoke from him a generous act, from which beginning may grow a disposition of sympathy and self-sacrifice.

Now what is the undying worm and unquenchable fire? What destructive agency do these images symbolise? Let us consider what one with a strict and individualistic moral code and a formalistic religion is likely to become.

The fact that he observes this morality and this religion, whereas most men do not, tends to make him proud of his own righteousness and contemptuous of the generality of mankind. He may feel some obligation to induce others to follow his example, but, in face of frequent failures to convert them, he is likely to get angry, and, regarding them as reprobates, to decrease his efforts. At the same time, he will be driven to explain away the apparent goodness of those who reject his preaching, fiercely repelling the suggestion that it is real. Thus, hating the presence and thought of his fellow-men, he will retire more within himself and to the company of those of like mind, and, in anxiety to rise in yet greater superiority over the common herd, will devote himself more assiduously to his religion. So will his life become circumscribed and intensified. But this constant occupation in a narrow sphere will produce mental inflammation. He will be easily irritated, and may be goaded to fury by occasional signs and thoughts of the happier men who will not accept his religion. He will, in consequence, acquire a harsh and contemptuous disposition, and will therefore offend his fellowreligionists and be offended by a like disposition in them. Thus will his existence be more and more isolated and restricted. He becomes a monomaniac. Whether at any stage of his misery he abandons the religion which has ruined him will depend largely on his strength of mind and the degree to which it has become part of himself. Certainly his pride and contempt will urge him to keep hold of it so long as sanity remains. And so, hating and hated, he is shut in to an ever-narrowing range of fierce activity. Hotter and hotter waxes the fire of the contracting circles of his consciousness. At last his mind burns itself up with its own heat. It shrivels, disintegrates, and is gone. He is now an imbecile. The human in him has passed away ; he is reduced to animality, but without an animal's keenness of perception and instinctive self-control. Such degeneration of the soul is known by ordinary experience in this world.

But religious pride and hypocrisy are not the only sins which will thus destroy a soul. Avarice tends to bring a soul to a like doom ; for it sets a man in antagonism to his neighbours and concentrates his thoughts on a small field. Sensuality also narrows the range of activity, though in a different manner ; for indulgence in sensual pleasure dulls the sensibility to other kinds of enjoyment and interest. And owing to the brevity of sensual pleasures the sensualist undergoes periods of dissatisfaction. Consequently the desire for sensual pleasure tends to become more insistent and less capable of satisfaction. We see here the conditions of degeneration, torment, and finally disintegration of the mind. But the process is more largely physical than in the case of avarice and religious pride.

The destruction of the soul, then, which arises out of sin has revealed itself as a kind of self-combustion, due to the limitation of the area of the soul's activity which sin produces. It is now apparent how love makes for life, and hate makes for death : love expands the range of the soul's activity in intercourse with other souls, and hate contracts the range of the soul's activity, while spurring it into fierce effort. Love is primary, in the sense that loving intercourse is valued for its own sake. But hate is secondary, since the soul does not hate for the sake of hating, but develops hate when its desires bring it into conflict with surrounding personalities. Love is not the only expansive disposition and activity of the soul, nor hate the only one which contracts, since not all the soul's activity is related to persons ; but they are the chief such, since the highest and most vital activity is related to persons. Love is the most effective agency for increasing the life ; and hate is the most effective agency for destroying the life, being the most potent ingredient in the fire of Gehenna.

So, then, does a soul, infected with sin which ordinary punishment cannot remove, burn itself away. But there remains the underlying self, which belongs to the eternal order of things. That can never perish. Personality is burnt down to the roots ; but the roots abide, and will put forth shoots anon. Such, at any rate, would be the utmost destruction to which a soul could be subject. But there must be degrees of this destruction of souls, with greater or less breach of continuity in life.

We have now considered in the abstract the different processes by which sin is destroyed—forgiveness, punishment, destruction. The two latter belong to what is commonly called "judgment," and henceforth it will be convenient to treat of them in combination, especially as they merge into one another. We have next to view judgment in various spheres of operation —namely, in the individual corporeal lifetime, in societies of human beings in the flesh, in the incorporeal existence to which the soul passes at death.

Through sin a man comes into conflict with the forces which environ him, and so suffers some limitation or disorganization or curtailment of his bodily existence. Intemperance causes illness and premature death, and selfishness impairs friendship and love. But the issues are confused by the general liability of human life to loss and premature ending and by the eventual necessity of death. The reality of Divine judgment in the individual lifetime is only to be appreciated when it is considered as part of continuous life. Then loss and premature death may appear as curtailment of the due power of accomplishing good that will endure beyond the death of the individual. And death itself, in its normal occurrence, has the character of judgment on a lifetime devoted to materialistic enhancement of the individual life. For death does not annihilate the result of work for humanity, nor development of soul. It does annihilate the result of accumulation of material wealth so far as the individual is concerned. And so death tends to make men labour for kinds of good only which survive the death of the individual.

The working of Divine judgment is manifest in societies more clearly, since the scale is larger and certain kinds of societies are not so subject as individuals to decay and death and destructive accidents.

Since a society embodies a moral character, it is subject to the Divine laws of reward and punishment and destruction. A typical instance of such judgment is a ruling class which has developed luxury and arrogance being overwhelmed by a great popular insurgence. We see here the slow growth of the sin—extending, perhaps, over centuries—and the suddenness and violence of the punishment. The sin itself is wont to blind the sinners to the fact that it is sin, and to the growing resentment of the oppressed, till it is too late to prevent disaster. A political revolution furnishes a good example of the truth that the Day of the Lord comes suddenly as a thief in the night. The prediction of a catastrophic end of the world is partly fulfilled in such national upheavals. Furthermore, we must not, because the agents of the punishment may be brutal and atheistic, refuse to recognise that it comes from God. Even so the Hebrew prophets declared the heathen Assyrians and Babylonians to be instruments of the correction of Israel in the hand of Jahwe. A tyrannical ruling class puts itself out of harmony with its environment through transgressing the natural and Divinely-ordained laws of justice, and so inevitably provokes its own punishment, in the shape of retaliation by the classes it has oppressed. The revolution is a manifestation of the justice that rules, though confused with other agencies, in the affairs of men.

Judgments befall also nations and religious societies. The destruction of the Jewish State by the Romans is a notable example of a nation that was also a religious society suffering Divine punishment. The national exclusiveness in its religion brought it into conflict with its neighbours by a natural law. This, however, is not to deny a more special influence of Providence whereby judgment is effected.

The parable of The Rich Man and Lazarus indicates that righteousness and sin are followed respectively by happiness and misery in the incorporeal existence to which souls pass at death. It is easy to think how this may be ; for this incorporeal existence provides little scope for the satisfaction of the physical appetites, but abundant scope for the higher activities. Consequently one who during his previous corporeal existence had made the satisfaction of physical appetites the chief aim of his thought and endeavour would find himself with strong desires that could hardly be appeased. So it is that sensual souls after death try to gratify their cravings through contact with those in the flesh who are given to similar indulgence. Now these intense desires, in their lack of satisfaction, constitute torment, and in course of time burn themselves away. And egoistic and malicious dispositions and ideas, being relieved of the hindrances and disturbances connected with corporeal life, but having no opportunity for giving themselves adequate effect, will likewise destroy in torment both themselves and, to some extent, the souls in which they inhere. But the functioning of nobler qualities without the restrictions of the body is joy, and promotes the growth of the soul. We should remark, however, that sin may continue to grow in a soul through several lifetimes before it meets with punishment sufficient to overcome it. Also the comparative freedom in the incorporeal existence from external influences at variance with the disposition militates against the likelihood of change of will, whether of fall into sin or of repentance.

Judgment, then, is the elimination of sin which proceeds naturally wherever and whenever the conditions are ripe. Sin invokes inevitably its own destruction and, to some extent, the destruction of the souls in whom it inheres. Or we may choose to make judgment include the corresponding encouragement of moral character which is suitable to the Kingdom of God. Goodness and badness, as according to the parable of The Tares, grow together, until by a natural process the badness is eliminated and the goodness is given more power. In this sense, perhaps, we may understand the saying of Jesus: "Where the carcass is, there will the vultures be gathered together." Judgment is, as it were, the natural selection of moral character in the growth of man for the Kingdom of God. But it takes place with special rapidity and force in periods of great moral and religious progress when the general level of morality is low. For the higher morality and religion arouse opposition, so that good and evil are revealed in fierce antagonism, till the evil perishes largely by its own natural tendencies.

Such, then, does Divine judgment appear to be according to the principles of the life of human souls. We see how evil grows powerful and then of itself passes to inevitable destruction, both in individual human beings in the flesh and in societies; and we may conjecture how a like process goes on in the world to which souls pass at death. But all this does not afford an adequate fulfilment of the words of Jesus according to the Synoptic Gospels. Jesus declared that the opportunity then existing for self-preparation for the Kingdom of God would come to an end, and that, the Kingdom of God being realised, those who had failed to use the opportunity would find themselves, to their deep shame and grief, excluded ; and all this would happen, apparently, in less than the space of a lifetime from when He was speaking. Now did anything or will anything corresponding to this prophecy happen? These are the two chief passages in which this prediction is made :—

1. "Strive to enter in by the narrow door : for many, I say unto you, shall seek to enter in, and shall not be able. When once the master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, open to us ; and he shall answer and say unto you, I know you not whence ye are ; then shall ye begin to say, We did eat and drink in thy presence, and thou didst teach in our streets ; and he shall say, I tell you, I know you not whence ye are ; depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity. There shall be the weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the Kingdom of God, and yourselves cast forth without. And they shall come from the east and west, and from the north and south, and shall sit down in the Kingdom of God. And behold, there are last which shall be first, and there are first which shall be last."

2. "Then shall the Kingdom of Heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom. And five of them were foolish, and five were wise. For the foolish, when they took their lamps, took no oil with them : but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. Now while the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept. But at midnight there is a cry, Behold, the

bridegroom! Come ye forth to meet him. Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are going out. But the wise answered, saying, Peradventure there will not be enough for us and you: go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves. And while they went away to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage feast: and the door was shut. Afterward come also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not. Watch therefore, for ye know not the day nor the hour."

The obvious interpretation is that at that time men could by their conduct fit themselves for participation in a heavenly life which would come not many years hence, while those who neglected to prepare themselves would be excluded from that life. The bitterness which would befall the latter would be largely disappointment and humiliation in being rejected as unworthy, together with chagrin at the bliss and exaltation of others whom they had accounted as far inferior to themselves. Jesus clearly had in mind the religious leaders of the Jews, who were confident in their superiority to the rest of mankind in the sight of the Lord.

In a way, this prophecy appears reasonable. The call to a higher righteousness such as Jesus and His disciples made, while it caused some to become better prepared for spiritual life, caused others to become more sinful in antagonism to the good. The poor and lowly, even if for the present incapable of any high moral and religious development, would not readily oppose the Gospel, so as to develop a character of arrogance and malice ; they would rather through meek acceptance of the Gospel participate, though at first in a small degree, in the blessings of the Kingdom of God, which would be realised through a large number of souls becoming collectively worthy of it. But in the meanwhile some souls would not merely have failed to fit themselves for it, but even have developed a character in opposition to it, who would therefore find themselves incapable of participation therein, to their grievous disappointment and vexation.

One may ask whether it would not be possible for the excluded even then, through repentance and faith, to obtain forgiveness and the new birth. For surely God would at no time refuse salvation. The answer is that faith sufficiently deep and enduring to ensure a continuous growth of the spiritual life requires a previous moral development, whereas pride and egoism render such faith impossible. Certainly there would be in the excluded strong desire for heavenly bliss and detestation of the conduct and ideas which had led to their exclusion, but hardly genuine desire for righteousness and detestation of sin. The present realisation of the glory to which righteousness leads would tend, in evoking desire rather for the externalities of the higher life, to prevent for the time true repentance and faith.

But how and when did all this take place? Did there occur any such establishment of the Kingdom of Heaven as Jesus foretold, and exclusion of the Scribes and Pharisees who scorned the Gospel? Did those who neglected the teaching of Jesus find themselves shut out from heavenly bliss, wailing and gnashing their teeth? Abstraction being made from the metaphor, did any great world-event take place such as could at all be symbolised by the Messianic Feast and the turning away of those who were not worthy? Was there any glorification of the Church of Christ in the early centuries of Christianity such as to convict religious hypocrites of their sin and make them fret with envy and disappointment?

The destruction of the Jewish State by the Romans constituted a judgment on Judaism. But to the materialistic eye the Christians must have seemed to have fared but little better than the Jews at that time and during the succeeding generations. The prediction of the immediate return of Christ was indeed fulfilled in a sense in the spiritual quickening of His followers. But one stiffened in Judaistic prejudice would not have seen in them the Kingdom of Heaven. Nor afterwards did the Christians enjoy any prosperity that could appear to their enemies the fulfilment of the hope of the Gospel. For soon they were subjected to terrible persecutions, which continued with intervals for over two centuries. And when the era of trial was past, the Church was rent with dogmatic disputes. And the high religious enthusiasm waned, and the beauty and splendour of early Christianity faded away.

Or are we to suppose that this judgment will come to pass—contrary to the apparent tenor of the teaching of Jesus—after many thousands of years, when the Kingdom of God, without sin or death, has already begun to be on earth? But it is hard to think that those who rejected the Gospel at the beginning would be kept waiting so long till they received conviction of their sin. We have already seen that sin becomes destroyed by normal processes when it has reached a certain magnitude. Would it not be more probable that these sinners would meet with their punishment in accordance with the natural tendencies of soul-life, and therefore long before the prophecies they derided have been fulfilled?

Are we, then, to count as a mistake the prediction of Jesus that those who opposed or neglected His teaching would see the Kingdom of Heaven realised in glory and find themselves, to their disappointment and humiliation, excluded? Was it just a false inference, due to the symbolic manner in which the truth as to the Kingdom of God was held—an inference from the premises, that the Kingdom of God was coming soon, and that those who scorned the opportunity to prepare for it would not participate therein—the truth being that a great spiritual quickening of His followers was about to come, which would be the beginning of that new life and growth which in a far distant age would produce the Kingdom of God?

Or is this prediction to be judged as an expression of the fact that the arrogant and indolent are commonly convicted of their sin by the success and happiness of the humble and diligent in contrast to their own failure and misery? But the kinds of morality which in this world are presently followed by such success and happiness as to provoke envy in the materialistic and egoistic are not generally of the noblest. The highest goodness has led rather to the Cross.

But we can understand how this prediction may have been fulfilled in the life after death. Jesus depicted Dives suffering torments in Hades and beholding Lazarus in Paradise. And psychical research affords good evidence of a period of happiness after death enjoyed by souls who have lived nobly in the flesh. It seems that with the escape from the material body the soul derives joy from the unhampered exercise of altruistic and idealistic qualities, and misery from the unsatisfied strivings of egoistic and materialistic desires. Such strenuous and heroic faith and love as breathed in the early Christians would, in this view, result after death in heavenly ecstasy and sweet fellowship of souls. Might not those who had spurned the Gospel, or had given but feeble and indolent allegiance to Christ, after death, being aware of the joy of the faithful, regret bitterly that they had not used their opportunity of becoming worthy of it? Might not the arrogant and avaricious and malicious among the religious leaders of the Jews, distraught with the misery that such dispositions produce, experience fearful envy and humiliation at the knowledge that the despised followers of Jesus had entered into the blissful rest of the people of God? Surely the Kingdom of Heaven was in some form realised behind the veil for those who had surrendered wealth and reputation and ties of kindred and life for the sake of the Gospel. And we may conjecture that those who rejected Jesus knew this to their chagrin and their shame.

So, when in a later age the evils and possibilities of good in civilization call for a great development of Christian love, and in the light of new knowledge devoted service for the evolution of humanity into the Kingdom of God, there will be after death for those who respond to that call joy and peace, but for those who, refusing to listen, live for the material interest of self and kindred misery and remorse. As before, there are last that shall be first, and there are first that shall be last.

Such, then, is Divine judgment. It is the removal of growths of human nature inimical to the development of the character of man which is suitable to the Kingdom of God. It goes on in individuals and in societies, in the corporeal and in the incorporeal worlds, continuously from age to age. But when evil has waxed great and powerful, trampling on good and defiant of the justice of the Universe, then does judgment fall with tragic might and swiftness. And thereafter the evildoers are with bitter pains purged, that they may share in the growing life of humanity.

## CHAPTER XII

## THE KINGDOM OF GOD

JESUS expected in the near future a new condition of life for human souls, which He called the Kingdom of God. But little is recorded of His idea of the nature of the Kingdom of God. We may gather that in it God and souls would be in much closer fellowship than before, that it would be blissful, that the physical condition of existence would be different, there being, in particular, no death or sex. Apparently He expected it to come into existence suddenly and visibly over a wide area. On the other hand, it could exist as the secret possession of individuals before that, and was growing. Some would be excluded from it owing to lack of moral and religious preparation; though, if we are to follow out the logical implications of His teaching, all would eventually enter thereinto. Jesus also gave abundant instruction on the religious disposition and moral character and conduct requisite and favourable to entrance, these being determined by the nature of God Himself.

Such was the original revelation by Jesus of the Kingdom of God. But He foresaw that through experience and the Holy Spirit His followers would receive further enlightenment thereupon when He was no longer with them in the flesh. As the Kingdom of God begins to be, humanity acquires more knowledge of its nature, of the manner in which it is coming into existence, and of the changes required in man in preparation for it. We will trace very briefly the main stages of revelation concerning the Kingdom of God since the teaching of Jesus.

Shortly after the departure of Jesus came a vivid experience of life that seemed in some sense Divine and from God—life which we have chosen to call "the spiritual." This we believe to have been the germ of that which is to be the principle of the Kingdom of God. Christians began to have a foretaste of what the blissful life predicted by their Master will be—as it were, an inexpressible light and joy and love.

Secondly, it was found that this experience was most effectively won through allegiance to Jesus considered as the Redeemer appointed by God, with special thought of His crucifixion and resurrection to heavenly life. And it is easy to understand how this was. For the requisite religion and morality could be more intensely produced through allegiance to a person in whom they and their heavenly results were signally embodied, especially since this allegiance normally demanded considerable self-sacrifice and loving trust in God, than through mere attention to His teaching. The teaching gave meaning to the life, and the life made the teaching more appealing. And so faith in Jesus Christ was declared to be the means to the new life which is the germinal principle of the Kingdom of God.

After the lapse of many generations the knowledge of the realisation of the Kingdom of God expands greatly. It did not come within the time expected with visible widespread glory. On the contrary, after a short period of religious activity, the early fervour and purity of Christianity succumbed to the prevalent worldliness. But morality and religion have, with occasional checks and set-backs, since been progressing in accordance with the fundamental ideas of Christianity, one period of growth commencing with advantages produced by the preceding. It seems, then, as if the Kingdom of God would be realised in this world through evolution of mankind in morality and religion and in other respects in the course of many generations.

For, surely, spiritual life must require many generations before it can complete the conquest of sin and death, although, indeed, we must allow for acceleration with advance in life. For in the early years of Christianity the spiritual appeared, but did not effect this result. And scientific investigation has shown that life has occupied millions of years in coming to its present condition, and that new kinds of life are at first small, requiring a number of generations to develop their powers.

We may gather, then, that the Kingdom of God will be realised on this globe through the development of morality and religion conditioning and being caused by spiritual life, under the Holy Spirit, and the spiritual developing until it overcomes the evils and limitations attaching to human existence. Certainly there may be times of change so rapid as to seem catastrophic, but these are prepared for by and lead up to periods of equable construction and growth. The whole process of the realisation of the Kingdom of God since the beginning of Christianity will appear as a process of spiritual quickening and growth of the whole nature of man under spiritual influence from God, with its continuity to some degree broken, in the earliest stages, perhaps, rather than afterwards, by relapses and violent conflicts of good with evil.

But humanity has been developing in other respects. Man has been acquiring more and more knowledge and control of physical forces, whereby he makes his life securer and richer. The mind has been growing intellectually and in the perception of beauty. And the body has shown tendencies to such growth as will support a more abundant and higher life. How are we to regard such various developments other than the moral and religious and spiritual?

We should observe that a certain evolution of the body was required for the support of perceptual consciousness, and that the body and this form of consciousness were required to evolve in order that mental consciousness might come into being, and that this sub-human evolution was complex and depended on special characteristics of the environment. On this analogy we should judge that the recent mental evolution of man other than the moral and religious, and his increased power to arrange his environment for the improvement of his existence are Divinely-ordained preparations for higher life in the future that will culminate in the Kingdom of God.

This conclusion is strengthened by the spiritual feeling that arises out of exalted philosophic and æsthetic states of mind. It is as if the complete spiritual nature must grow out of a manifold development of both will and intellect and emotion, like as the mental nature requires a manifold development of the physical nature.

We thus arrive at the conception of the Kingdom of

God being realised through the collective self-evolution of humanity under the Spirit of God. Humanity consists of a number of individuals, each being ideally a complex of physical and mental and spiritual, socially interrelated with one another. Now the Kingdom of God is realised through the co-operative action of the members of humanity, together with the action of the Holy Spirit, to promote the evolution of humanity physically and mentally and spiritually in accordance with the ideal—namely, the Kingdom of God—which is revealed gradually.

This conception of the realisation of the Kingdom of God, which is due to the discovery of evolution, accords with the ampler conception of love which has evolved out of that prevalent in early Christianity. Formerly the love of God was thought to be limited by the necessity of judgment. God was believed to be merciful to sinners till the end of the world, and thenceforward, if they had not repented, to love and help them no more. But love has grown so as to engender sympathy for each individual self, so that the Universe would be unsatisfactory if one were permanently excluded from salvation. Wherefore judgment appears as an element in the continuous process of the Divine evolution of souls. And love demands also that each individual in humanity shall be helped to the development of his nature, so far as is compatible with the wellbeing of the whole, and thus produces co-operation in the promotion of that life which is generally recognised as good. And in so doing love assists in that evolution of humanity, physical and mental and spiritual, whereby the Kingdom of God is coming into being.

We must add that the evolutionary view of the Kingdom of God implies that souls have several lifetimes in physical humanity. This leads on to the thought of the incorporeal existence which intervenes between the physical lifetimes. Accordingly humanity consists of a number of souls having alternately corporeal and incorporeal existence, and in both these phases is in process of evolution into the Kingdom of God, in which these breaks and divisions shall have ceased.

Such is the conception of the realisation of the Kingdom of God necessitated by the doctrine of evolution and the development of love. Science and the amplification of the love which Christianity put into the world together require us to think of the ideal promised by Jesus as being realised by a collective growth of souls from generation to generation, physically and mentally and spiritually, through co-operation in loving service.

And this developed conception of the realisation of the Kingdom of God constitutes a great development of Christianity. For the first time religion and human life enter into complete relation to one another. This religious conception claims control of the whole of human life ; every part and aspect thereof is to be viewed and re-formed in the light of the growing ideal of humanity. For the first time religion becomes truly comprehensive : for the first time human life in its extent and variety is given significance.

Once more we will consider what Christianity was —what was its main purpose, and whence it derived its force—in the early years of its existence. Christianity had at that time a narrower aim and scope—

to engender that faith and that tradition of faith whereby humanity would be saved and raised to Divine life. It applied itself to the establishment of that religious tradition which, surviving the downfall of the existing civilizations, should be the means of vital religion in ages to come. So long as that work demanded great self-sacrifice, so long was Christianity vigorous and beautiful. When, however, the religious tradition had become firmly rooted, the vigour and beauty of Christianity came to an end. But when Christianity applies itself to the evolution of humanity according to the Divine ideal, then, with this wide aim and scope, its vigour and beauty are more wonderful than they were before.

Christianity arose among a people whose political and social organization was destined shortly to be destroyed. And generally, the civilization of that epoch was not to be of long continuance. The time, therefore, was not come for the consolidation of a social order which would secure the conditions of a widespread development of humanity in body and mind. Truly the end of the age was nigh at hand, so that man had to wait till the next age before he could consciously undertake his own evolution. The one supreme need for the period was the formation of a strong religious society based on allegiance to Jesus as the Revealer of God and Saviour of mankind, which, surviving the approaching disintegration of the civilized states and the barbarian invasions, would carry on the tradition of the Gospel into the next age. The Gospel, once securely planted among the new developing civilizations, would in course of time manifest the religious and ethical principle whereby the further evolution of humanity would be directed.

The religious and ethical principle was expressed by Jesus as the law to love God with all the heart and soul and mind and strength, and the law to love one's neighbour as oneself. This latter He applied so as to make it signify that one must love any one with whom one comes into contact, and to love enemies He especially enjoined. This love to one's fellow-man seems to have been thought of as taking effect mainly in deeds of mercy upon the needy and suffering and in forbearance towards those who wronged one. But the grand fulfilment of this twofold law in the early years of Christianity was preaching and witnessing for the Gospel ; for by so doing the Christian worked for the accomplishment of the will of God and for the good of human beings.

The religious and ethical principle of Christianity was by the followers of Jesus expressed as faith in Jesus Christ crucified and risen from death. This faith, St. Paul affirmed, involved dying or being crucified with Christ, and that led to rising with Christ even in this mortal existence. It was not explained precisely what faith in Jesus Christ meant. It seems to have meant—first, acknowledgment of Jesus as the Christ or Messiah ; secondly, devotion to His will in carrying on the work for which He lived and died—namely, by preaching and witnessing for the way of salvation. This would require considerable self-sacrifice and renunciation of so-called worldly enjoyments and ambitions, and hence appeared as a kind of dying to the lower life.

It is interesting to observe that the writers of the New Testament appear as hardly conscious of connection between faith in Christ crucified and love. St.

Paul is taken up at one time with the former and at another time with the latter. St. John speaks now of one, now of the other as the essential, or couples them together. The connection, however, comes near being expressed in the saying in the Gospel of John, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends"; and in the Epistle, in the words, "Hereby know we love, because He laid down His life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren." The connection is surely this: Faith in Jesus Christ crucified is, at its highest, to have that love to God and man which animated Him in the submission to the Cross. Now mere outspoken allegiance to Jesus as the Christ normally involved for the early Christians, on account of the persecution and ignominy which beset them, considerable religious ardour and trust, together with love for men inspired by the recorded teaching of the Lord. Faith in Jesus Christ, then, was for many a state of high religion and humanitarian tenderness, and was accompanied by the sense of salvation.

But as Christian preaching proved successful, open declaration of faith in Christ lost much of its significance. For it no longer involved that intense religious ardour and trust which were necessary to uphold one who declared himself the adherent of a persecuted and contemned religion. What, then, remained if faith in Christ no longer involved this disposition of dying with Christ?

Certainly the morality of the teaching of Jesus remained—forgiveness, forbearance, contempt of worldly riches, works of mercy to the poor and suffering. But this failed to provide for all an adequate content for life. It was to a large extent negative rather than positive, consisting of injunctions not to retaliate or harbour resentment, and not to engage in the quest of worldly goods ; while the relief of the bodily wants and the sorrows of others could hardly constitute the chief activity of the generality of mankind. Certainly the commands, "Resist not evil" and "Take no thought for the morrow, what ye shall eat or wherewithal ye shall be clothed," required a very high degree of religious devotion ; but the constant pressure of material wants prevented them from becoming commonly fulfilled. However, besides this morality, there was the duty of preaching to the unconverted. But this, again, could become the main occupation only of a few.

There remained what was called faith. But since faith had been in the sacred writings opposed to works, and since it had not been defined as self-devotion to God in Christ (the real saving faith in primitive Christianity), it became interpreted as belief. And the object of belief, owing to the intellectual activity of the epoch, was expanded into a body of theological propositions. But this sort of faith is impotent for salvation.

But the knowledge of the growth of the Kingdom of God which has come through the subsequent experience of the race and scientific investigation into the evolution of life, by affording Christianity an adequate content, enables it to recover its pristine vigour and intensity, but with greater breadth and steadiness. Faith in Christ is found to involve willingness to serve with all one's powers the growth of humanity, physical and mental and spiritual, since thereby the end for which

Jesus laboured and died will be reached. The true participation in the Cross is self-sacrifice for the main object for which Jesus sacrificed Himself, with a view to different subsidiary objects, such as different times and circumstances present. Love for God involves work for the realisation of the Kingdom of God, since that is His will ; so too does love for men, since that is their supreme good. And this love must show itself in pity and forbearance and sympathy, since by these are souls strengthened and purified and developed. And love must take account of human life in all its various branches and elements. And so will all theoretical and practical activity form a growing whole under the inspiration of the Spirit of God.

But is such trouble for the sake of physical life as this implies consistent with Christianity? There comes into our minds that beautiful and sublime discourse of Jesus in which He deprecates taking trouble to provide food and raiment, declaring that the Father in Heaven will provide them far better than men could for themselves. Let us hearken to Him as He speaks these words :—

" No man can serve two masters : for either he will hate the one, and love the other ; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon. Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink ; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than the food, and the body more than the raiment? Behold the birds of heaven ; they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns ; and your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are not ye of much more value than they? And which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature? And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow ; they toil not, neither do they spin : yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. But if God doth so clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, shall He not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? Take no thought therefore, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?—all these being things after which the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first His Kingdom, and His righteousness ; and all these things shall be added unto you. Take no thought therefore for the morrow : for the morrow will take thought for itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." (The word *μεριμνᾶν* seems to signify "to pay careful heed to," "to take trouble about anything.")

With what Divine radiance glows this teaching ! What beatific feeling of escape does it stir in those who are aware of the chains of custom and daily toil—escape into a free and beautiful life ! Yet that we may gather the meaning, let us make bold to criticise.

In the first place, it may be said, man differs from the birds and flowers in that he is obliged for the maintenance of his life to work at the transformation of the products of Nature, so as to make them satisfy his bodily needs. It is, indeed, natural to man to plough the ground and to sow corn, and to grind and bake the fruit of what he has sown ; it is natural to man to spin and weave flax and cotton and wool, and then to fashion the resulting material into garments. It is as natural to man to take thought and trouble about the provision of food and clothing as it is for birds to pick up grain and for plants to blossom. And if this is natural, it is not easy to deem unnatural the multitudinous and complex operations of civilized mankind for the provision of necessities and conveniences and comforts, since these operations are but a development of the former.

In the second place, it is largely through this taking thought and trouble that man has developed that higher nature by which he is distinguished from the brute beasts. If a tribe of uncivilized men were to have abundant food and clothing and shelter automatically provided, it is probable that they would degenerate and almost lose their specifically human qualities. And it is surely the specifically human qualities which render men capable of moral goodness and religion. The intellect and character which toil and forethought have called forth are requisite for the apprehension of the Christian Gospel.

Thirdly, love, which is the essence of Christian life, fulfils itself largely through great thought and trouble on behalf of the physical wellbeing of the poor. Those who, in pity on account of the disease and vice and dinginess besetting the dwellers in crowded cities, toil with sacrifice of ease and comfort to give them better food and raiment and shelter, are surely good followers of Jesus. And all such philanthropy calls forth and develops intellect and moral resolution and love—love between the helpers and the helped, and among the helpers one with another. Extensive and long-continued expenditure of thought and energy in gradually securing physical welfare for mankind seems to be a right and necessary application of Christianity, in view of certain evils and the fact that mankind evolves.

How are we to reconcile all this with the command of Jesus not to trouble or care about bodily needs? First, we must not ignore in this connection the fact that the end of the world or age was expected in a few years, when the Kingdom of God would come with power. That being so, it was all-important for the souls of men to become prepared for participation in the new world or age. Wherefore it would have been almost waste of energy to labour then at the reform of social institutions—as, for instance, at the abolition of slavery. And in truth the then existing civilizations were destined to pass away. The chief duty of the Christian was to get the tradition of the religious principle of Christianity firmly rooted in mankind, out of which a new social order would grow in time to come. And the imminent disintegration of society, at least in Judæa, together with the persecution of Christianity, rendered for the individual Christian abundant provision for bodily needs both of uncertain benefit and dangerous to religious fidelity. To some degree, then, the condemnation of thought and labour for the bodily needs of the future was right in the time of Jesus, but is wrong under the conditions of the world that have since developed.

But there remains yet great and valuable truth shining in this teaching of Jesus. For it is right to condemn exhausting the energy in taking thought and trouble on the externals of life, so that the essential good of the soul is almost neglected and ignored. And the folly of it is all the more striking, since it does not produce as good results as the processes of Nature produce for lower forms of life. But it is reasonable to think that God would provide at least as well for the nourishment and beauty of human souls as for birds and plants. The truth is that the externals of life are perfectly adapted to life only when it is Divinely ordered. In the lower creation the spontaneous operation of organic forces produces health and beauty. In man mind interferes with the natural functioning of organism, and effects a blundering performance of what Nature does well and without the living being having a sense of effort. But there is a higher stage, in which the soul, conscious of the Divine will, organizes natural forces and instinctive activities with a view to its fulfilment.

The command and promise, then, hold good : "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God, and His righteousness ; and all these things shall be added unto you." If the Kingdom of God is made the one all-inclusive aim of action, and so the life is conducted in accordance with the righteousness of God, then will bodily existence become, if not forthwith, yet ere long, rich and beautiful. Thought and labour may have to be expended on making it so ; but this thought and labour will be Divinely inspired and directed. In particular, they will be expended with a view to the common growing life of humanity. What pain and misery have men undergone in their quest of material goods ! How fearfully have they marred their life thereby ! With what pretentious ugliness have they adorned themselves ! But when love and the sense of the Divine ideal permeate their souls, labour for material goods will be joyous, and the results will be healthful and beautiful. Men will indeed be fed and clad by God, though by God operating through their own wills.

Then, in the second place, Nature is far better adapted to human life than has commonly been recognised. There is conceivable a healthier and fairer existence for men, in which they should use what is naturally provided for them, with much less thought and labour in applying it than is usual in industrial civilization. When the human body, no longer softened by excessive protection and too delicate nourishment, and no longer strained and distorted by unnatural labour, is immersed in the unspoiled air and the sunlight, and is fed and worked wholesomely, what a wonderful instrument will it be of the growing spirit! Physical life in full and fresh contact with Nature seems destined for humanity. And for that pioneer souls do hunger and thirst.

But if it will be feasible one day to expend but little thought and effort on provision for physical needs, it is not feasible during the continuance of industrial civilization such as grew to huge proportions during the nineteenth century. For constant and organized labour is requisite adequately to bring the good things of Nature to the dwellers in cities and to counteract the evils that arise from this mode of existence. The unnatural condition into which man has got himself necessitates immensely more trouble, if he is to avoid starvation and pestilence, than would a state of close contact with Nature. And he must also think and work hard to get into such a natural state that comparatively little thought and work for physical needs would suffice.

But there is yet another way in which men are provided for and protected by God, so that they ought not to have much care about their own physical needs. The biographies of saints, and of great men generally, suggest that they are supernaturally guided and assisted in their development and their work. And less distinguished persons have seemed to have had like guidance and help. We may conclude that, in general, those who devote themselves to accomplishing the will of God—that is, to the realisation of the Kingdom of God—may be relatively free from care about their own physical welfare, being specially assisted by Divine Providence.

Finally, it is probable that the truth of this teaching of Jesus will be better understood and carried out when Oriental mankind becomes Christian. It seems as if it were the function of the West rather to develop the practical activity in this world arising out of Christianity, and the function of the East rather to develop contemplation and intercourse with the invisible world. But the ideal is a union of the twain.

Our journey is at an end ; the prospect of humanity growing into the Kingdom of God is before us.

Humanity consists of a number of souls which alternate between a material and an immaterial existence. They have life in three main kinds—physical, mental, spiritual, with numerous species of these. They interact and tend to become more vitally interconnected. The destiny of humanity is a condition in which the spiritual shall be completely dominant. This will involve continuous and harmonious life and the union of the material and the immaterial forms of existence.

As humanity grows its members become increasingly conscious of its nature and destiny, and devote their powers to forwarding its growth. Humanity tends to become a community of which the members live in conscious co-operation for the common end. Each will then have knowledge of the whole—its nature and destiny—and of his own relation to all that ; each will devote himself to the promotion of that growth in such a way as to produce, in conjunction with the others, the best result ; each will love all the others and certain among them more intimately, both because love is of the growth and destiny of humanity, and also because love is required for the most effective promotion of the growth of others, and more and more as the growth proceeds.

Humanity in its life and growth, especially in the life and growth of its spiritual nature, is dependent on a great spiritual Being—God. And as humanity grows spiritually, so does it come more and more into relation with God. The spiritual quickening and growth of humanity takes place through souls putting themselves into communication with God, which is religion. At its highest, religion is communion with God with the will and disposition to serve in love for souls the growth of humanity into the Kingdom of God. The worshipper offers himself to God as an agent of the Divine will, being confident that in work and self-sacrifice with love on behalf of human beings, so as to help them to acquire that nature in virtue of which they can participate in the Kingdom of God, he is carrying out the Divine will ; and he craves inspiration such as shall enable him to be as effective as possible in doing so. And so is the Divine will for humanity forwarded, both in that through religion souls receive spiritual life, and in that with spiritual life they the more promote the Divinely-willed growth of humanity.

This religious co-operation of all, with spiritual life, for the good of all, would not constitute the perfect Kingdom of God, but would make effectively for its realisation. The perfect Kingdom of God would be the life of the community in which the spiritual has transformed the other elements and conditions of life in accordance with itself.

Here we find the meaning and the truth of Christianity. Loving self-devotion (even with much suffering and renunciation) to the good of humanity, as the fulfilment of the will of God—God Himself participating therein—is the Crucifixion. The resulting and accompanying quickening and development of spiritual life is the Resurrection. The condition of humanity which will be realised through these is the Kingdom of God.

We are set to toil, through limitation and ugliness and dulness and grief, for mankind—for the bodies, their health and security and development, for the intellectual and the practical and the æsthetic faculties, for religion and the spirit—rejoicing in the assurance that, so toiling, we are bringing into being a glorious humanity. Labours in various places for various ends—each is an addition to the power that is surely effecting that for which we long. The life is growing, growing, growing.

How inspiring is the thought of manifold work and self-sacrifice producing manifold growth of humanity into its Divine ideal! How this calls forth energy, endurance, love! To toil, live, die, and live again for the great purpose!

Such is our religion, our life, our destiny.

---

UNWIN BROTHERS, LIMITED, THE GRESHAM PRESS, WOKING AND LONDON.

R